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DR HOBOKEN



RAY M. JOHNSON



SIGNED

1/e

Ray N. Johnson.

JFD
73-615

HEAVEN, HELL, OR HOBOKEN

By

RAY NEIL JOHNSON

Illustrated by

DON PALMER

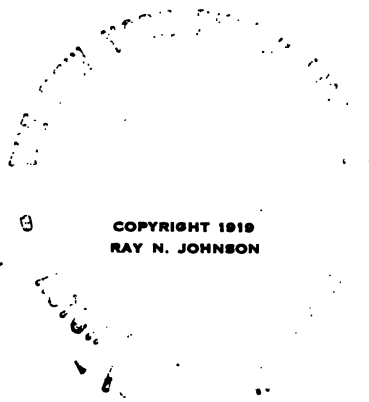
VIC NORRIS

The slogan of the A. E. F.—

“Boys, we’ll be in Heaven, Hell, or
Hoboken by Christmas !”

—*Black Jack Pershing.*





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**THE O. S. HUBBELL PRINTING CO
CLEVELAND, O.**

*“Dedicated to Those Who Suffered Most—
Our Mothers.”*

FOREWORD

THIS book was originally written for members of the Machine Gun Company, 145th Infantry, 37th Division, but since it contains information of so much interest to the public it has been put on the market.

It is a truthful account, based on actual daily records, of our experiences in the U. S. Army from the time of the induction of the National Guard into Federal Service, July 15th, 1917, to the date of our discharge, April 22nd, 1919.

Nothing has been exaggerated, and nothing has been under-rated. We have dealt equally with great battles and small incidents of our army life; both the tragic and the comic, the sublime and the ridiculous have been described in detail.

We firmly believe, after having scoured the magazine and newspaper articles as well as the books dealing with the experiences of men in The World War, that nowhere in the world has been published such an unbiased narration of actual experience as this.

It is far from being a literary masterpiece. Its power lies in the fact that it is the Truth. It is the War from the enlisted man's point of view.

RAY N. JOHNSON,
Private, U. S. Army.

I endorse the foregoing statement in full.

(Signed) CHARLES L. WEDOW,
Captain Inf., U. S. Army.

(Signed) CHARLES C. CHAMBERS,
Lt. Col. Inf., U. S. Army.

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Official Service Record

Machine Gun Co., 145th U. S. Infantry.

Baccarat Sector.....Aug. 4 to Sept. 16, 1918
Avocourt Sector.....Sept. 21 to Sept. 25, 1918
Pannes Sector (St. Mihiel).....Oct. 7 to Oct. 16, 1918
Meuse-Argonne Offensive.....Sept. 26 to Oct. 1, 1918
Flanders Offensive, forcing crossing of Lys and Escaut Rivers
.....Oct. 31 to Nov. 4, 1918
Flanders Offensive, forcing crossing of Escaut River at Syngem
.....Nov. 9 to Nov. 11, 1918



On Bolivar Road, near the corner of Prospect Avenue and East Fourteenth Street, Cleveland, Ohio, there is a weatherbeaten brick building with a single stone tower at one corner; a round tower with long narrow windows and medieval battlements, like the dungeon-keep of an ancient castle, dark and forbidding in aspect. A great arched entrance with broad stone steps and massive wooden doors opens into a small lobby or ante-room, from which entrance is gained to the hall with its galleries and stage, where many a famous orator or lecturer has addressed his audience. It is good old Grays' Armory, the home of the Cleveland Grays, and dear to the hearts of the "old men" of the Machine Gun Company because of its countless associations with their army life from the time they entered Uncle Sam's service in the summer of 1917 until they departed for training at Camp Sheridan in the fall of the year. It was offered to us as a home for the company by the Grays, and, next to our own individual homes, it comes first in our affections. It will be equally loved by the men who joined us at Sheridan and Lee and "Over There," if it is our good fortune to be quartered there again before we all are separated and scattered.

There is a wide, worn flight of stairs which leads up into the tower and private hall. Many a man mounted them in those days with unwilling feet, to "go up on the carpet" before Skipper Chambers and get what was coming to him,—usually a job cleaning the little coop at the head of the basement stairs! Higher in the tower is the "Brig," where languished that adventurous and cantankerous pair, Howard Frye and Ben Shiffman, who "went" to see their girls without Cap Chambers' permission.

Downstairs is the main hall with its broad, smooth expanse of wooden floor. Along its right wall were piled hundreds of chairs for

use during lectures and plays.



At the rear end was the old collapsible stage, with wide doors on either side opening into the alley. At the opposite end were the old gun racks. In one corner stood a fine piano, an instrument which furnished us with plenty of music and amusement during idle hours. It was in this hall that most of our formations were held, and where we struggled through calisthenics and Butt's Manual whenever Lieutenant "Ted" Pierce took the notion that we needed it. Those were the "palmy days," when we considered it an outrage to be drilled even two or three hours! We little knew what was in store for us.

At the rear of the building, above the stage, were the little rooms, where slept Norman MacLean, "Stinkem" Joe Boyd, Matt Manning, Lewis Carey, George Tepper, Chuck Jones, Henry Welker, Frank Carlin, Norman Byram and Steve Byram. These fellows were not so fortunate as the rest of us who had homes to go to every night. However, ask any one of them whether or not they had a good time in this improvised home!

Beyond the little brick-paved alley behind the armory lay the old Erie cemetery. Have any of us forgotten the "Graveyard Rat?" Did you ever stand guard at the rear armory door early in the morning and have the "Rat" ask you for a dime for whiskey? Somehow, there was always something of interest going on in the alley. If it wasn't new rookies learning the "school of the soldier" under Lee Carl's tutelage, Bill Williams was exhibiting his skill as a crack shot with the "forty-five" or there was a crap game to watch. Perhaps there was some Border man "bulling" the newest recruit about his hair-raising experiences in Texas. Now and then there was a dog fight, usually between Tige and a strange dog. Tige was our mascot, a huge brindle-bull.

If you weren't on extra duty or one of the usual details, you didn't have to show up at the armory in the morning until roll call at 9:00 A. M. Most of us managed so as to just make it in time to fall in. A few, particularly the newest recruits, would come in at 7:00 or 8:00 o'clock, but not for long,—in a few days they also *would begin to sleep late like the rest.* Usually the only fellows *around that early* were Mac, Joe Boyd, Lee Carl and his dog Tige.

Tige was a rough customer ; only a young dog, but heavily built, and armed with a set of teeth that gave a man the "Willies" to look at. He had a way of curling back his lips and sticking out his pair of long lower tusks, when teased too much, that was ample warning to any tormentor. His mania was a deep hatred for cats and an insatiable desire to fight strange dogs. After Tige came to the armory the cats "high-balled" for safer quarters. The only dog he ever tolerated was little "Bullets," a white mongrel pup that followed us in from the streets one day as we came back from drill. At that, poor Bullets lived a dog's life, especially when Tige felt inclined to play.



As usual, those summer mornings, a few of the early birds would be sitting on the front steps ; Mac, just out of bed and in his habitual comical humor ; Joe Boyd staring up the street with a vacant look, waiting for something to happen ; Matt Manning picking his teeth after a breakfast at the "Y ;" a new man or two, (poor misguided birds!) day-dreaming of future glory, and wishing they could get hold of a uniform ; Lee Carl playing with Tige while the morning front door guard watched with amusement, or wondered in bad language where his "relief" was. Along about 8:00 o'clock Lieutenant Wedow, Lieutenant Pierce or Lieutenant Sprague would arrive. Some one of the boys would call "attention" and all would rise and salute,—some assortment of salutes in those days ! It was a common occurrence for a rookie, taken by surprise, to raise his hand too late, and then, with a foolish expression on his face, try to "cover up" by scratching his nose.

From that time on there would be more doing. Some bird would come in with a story of his adventures of the night before,—they were all devils with the women, to hear them talk ! A few others would show up looking "wally-eyed" and in need of sleep. The phone would ring ; a call from some fond relative asking the top sergeant if "Jack had stayed there last night—he hadn't been home." Wallie's answer usually was, "No, he wasn't —er, just a minute. Oh, yes, he was on guard !" Wallie always was a good scout.

At nine o'clock came the roll-call formation, held either inside the armory or on the wide sidewalk out in front. Captain Chambers

would come down from his office in the tower, take the report from



the first sergeant and cast his eye up and down the company. Each man hoped that look wouldn't stop at him and breathed a subdued sigh of relief when it had passed. If a hat was cocked at an angle or a pocket unbuttoned the unlucky bird sure heard about it! You couldn't feel safe even in the rear rank when the Skipper was out in front. He would give a few orders to be carried out during the day, and then in charge of Lieutenant Pierce or Lieutenant Sprague we would be marched to Payne's Pasture for our two hours of drill. Drill! We were allowed to fall out to rest and smoke about every ten minutes! When the allotted time was up we would march back up Euclid Avenue and East Fourteenth Street to the Armory, singing "The

Machine Gun Men," "America, Here's My Boy" or "The Jackass Battery."

We messed in those days at the Central Y. M. C. A. dining room at 22nd and Prospect Avenue. Each man was allowed seventy-five cents a day for meals and had a mess number which he mentioned to the cashier. His bill was marked up against his number on their records and turned in to Mess Sergeant Byram. If he overran the seventy-five cent limit it was merely charged to him on the pay-roll. Sad to say, a few unwise ones failed to keep their numbers secret. It was easy for another bird to bring a "skirt" to lunch with him at their expense!

As we almost invariably had the afternoon to ourselves, and there were a thousand and one places of amusement nearby, the long lazy summer passed quickly. A man in uniform was welcomed and admitted without charge to any of the movies. Our favorite was the Stillman. If so inclined we could find a couple of burlesque shows within five minutes walk. A favorite game was a walk down Ninth to Euclid and thence to the square—girls adore khaki! In the evenings we could go on an expedition to "The Beach," that popular summer resort on the lake, or take a longer trip to Willough Beach and enjoy an evening of dancing. Then there was Luna Park, or Edgewater, or Gordon; and never was there any lack of girls! Yes, the summer passed altogether too quickly.

At last we received our orders to proceed to Camp Sheridan.

Our scanty equipment was taken to the railroad yards and loaded in box-cars. On the afternoon of September 25th, 1917, with the eyes of our mothers, fathers, sisters and sweethearts upon us, we formed in company front on the sidewalk before the armory door. The roll was taken and the report, "Sir, all are present or accounted for," given to Lieutenant Wedow. There were a scant few moments at "rest" and then, "Company—'Ten-shun!" (Disturbing lumps rose in our throats.) "Squads right—Column right—March!" and we were off to the old Water street station.



The streets were decorated with bunting and flags and crowded with people. As we rounded the corner of Lakeside Avenue and East Sixth and swung into line behind the regiment, the Machine Gunners, Cleveland's singing company, broke into song with "America, Here's My Boy." We sang those old songs as we had never sung them before—our hearts were in our voices. As we neared the station the mass of people surged around us until we could scarcely get through. Some even broke into the ranks, thinking as the column entered the depot gates it was their last chance to bid their boys farewell.

However, it proved a long and wearisome wait before we entrained. We fell out at the depot and gathered with our loved ones in small groups. Most of us were cheerful and happy, and so were the mothers, fathers, sisters and sweethearts, although their's was the hardest part. We soldiers, all young and confident, were impatient to be off, though fully aware that it might be months or even years before we could return. Not that we were insensible to the sadness of leave-taking, but that we had even in our few months of army life schooled ourselves to be cheerful in the face of any hardship.

At last all was ready and we were marched to the cars. There were a few moments of suspense and tearful farewells from the car windows and then, amid a surging mass of upturned faces, fluttering hands and handkerchiefs, and a babel of voices and cheers, we slowly moved out of the depot and, rounding the curve, disappeared from view.



How you worried for fear of being rejected when you went down to enlist,—and drank water or choked down a big meal,—or learned the eyesight chart until you could have read it standing on your head?

That “different” feeling once you were irrevocably in their clutches?

The first time Cap Chambers had you on the carpet and you came down looking the worse for wear?

(And, as a consequence)

The first time you policed the little room just at the head of the basement stairs?

What a drag with the women that uniform gave you, and how you felt like an honest to gosh hero? (In spite of the fact that those army shoes looked like canal boats, and there was room enough to pour water in the tops of your canvas leggings, and you needed suspenders to keep your misfit breeches from falling to half-mast.)



How your best girl worshiped you, and your mother wept a few tears, but was so proud of you; and your father strutted and told everyone that *his* son had enlisted,—and your new comrades said, “Gosh, look at the ears on him!”

How difficult it was to keep track of all your buttons and keep them buttoned?

How important you felt the first time you were on guard with the company forty-five on your hip?

That the first time you were on guard you kept “always on the alert,” and walked your post “in a military manner”?

That the next time, you sat down and read a newspaper?

That the first time you saw Grover Schaible you thought he must be an officer, and how you felt when, after meekly taking a bawling out from him, you discovered he was a private?

What a hard guy and "lady-killer" Bill Williams was? What a nut "Tommie" Thomas was? And what a tough customer Joe Boyd appeared to be?

How "big" Captain Chambers, Lieutenant Wedow, and Lieutenant Pierce looked to you, and how "small" you felt in comparison?

The back alley the night of the Colored Elks' Convention?

Those "long" hikes out to 55th street?

How you dolled up and tried to "get orderly" on Saturday night—and didn't?

Who usually got it?

How sore you were when you found out that some other bird was eating on your number at the "Y," and that all the sympathy you got when you reported it to Sergeant Byram was the information that you were a darn fool to let anyone get your number?

How you felt during the last formation in front of the armory just before we marched to the depot?



Captain Chambers' Departure

- On or about September 1st, Captain Chambers left for Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to attend Machine Gun School. He called the company together in the private hall of the armory and bade us farewell, asking *that we be as loyal to Lieutenant Wedow as we had been to*

him. We gave him three rousing cheers and wished him the best of luck.

The Skipper was a man of iron discipline, but the friend of every man in the company, and although we were glad to see Lieutenant Wedow take the helm, we were unfeignedly sorry to see Captain Chambers go, even though we knew he would come back some day in the future.



Small Shot

We hope that the Colored Elks hold another convention when we get back.

The cats came fiddling out of a barn
With a brother tom-cat under their arms.
All they could sing was "fiddle-come-fee."
" 'Twas that onery dog Tige, Tom, that finished thee."

Has anyone forgotten the day when we went down to Central Armory to get our first shot in the arm? We refrain from giving embarrassing details.

Et Cetera

Karasek answered the phone one day and a sweet voice purred :
"Is Lieutenant Donaldson there?"

Oh, Earl! We're afraid you've been spoofing them!

Tommy—"How tall are you, Scotty?"

Gloyd B—"Six-feet-four inches. Why?"

Tommy—"Gee! I didn't know they piled it that high."

If you want to worry the matron of the Y. M. C. A. just call her up and tell her that Sergeant Williams, our up-to-date Solomon, is back.

Slatinsky (to sympathetic listener)—"I tink I was quit dis army job and go to work by a factory for two dollar-half a day!"

One fine summer evening Jack Stimmel borrowed Steve Byram's Saxon runabout, and told him he'd be back in an hour. He left Steve sitting on the rear steps of the Armory entertaining "Little Mary."

The front door guard says Steve had to take Mary home in a Stanley bus.

The rear door guard says Stimmel got in about 2:00 A. M.

Waldo had previous training. He used to beat the drum in the Salvation Army.

Privates Corlett, Herig, Kope, Stimmel and Harry Cater used to shine their shoes by the hour to get "Orderly." Even Bender and Stanbury had no chance against Corlett, but one night he failed. The other four privates saw an opportunity for some fun; so about 11:00 P. M., when Corlett was doing his bit at the back door, they sneaked into the graveyard. Corlett had been unable to procure ammunition for the forty-five and, it being a lonesome spot and his first time on guard, he was considerably fussed up.

The four privates proceeded to the scene of the tragedy with a "thirty-two" in Stimmel's possession. Everything was pre-arranged. They all knew their roles.

Herig and Kope had the argument.

Stimmel fired the shot.

Cater did the groaning.

Corlett threw a fit and beat it back through the armory to the



corporal of the guard, who was asleep. The corporal got sore and said "damn," and other things. He refused to give him ammunition and made him go back to his post.

The four privates laughed.

Next day the company laughed.

But Corlett never "got wise," and won't until he reads this.



Darkness had already enshrouded the city when we started on our journey to the South, and our last impression of the good old town was a mixture of glaring arc lamps, illuminated signs, red and green rail-lights, the dusky shapes of box-cars on sidings and the dark hulks of factories, elevators and huge oil-tanks along the tracks. With gathering speed we switched onto the main road and passed a cheering mob at the Newburgh station. Then the buildings and homes became fewer in number, we whizzed by a few freight trains on sidings, and were in the open country.

We soon tired of gazing out of the windows, and as the lights in the car came on, card games began, books and magazines were produced, mandolins and "ukes" brought forth, and conversation concerning past, present and future started; the whole producing a babel indescribable, which was augmented when a hot crap game in the smoker of our Pullman began to get hotter.

Along about 4:00 A. M. the porter came through and made up the berths. Weary with the strain of maintaining cheerful countenances during the parting from home and loved ones, our heads whirling with thoughts of them and perhaps a few vain regrets and conjectures on the future, we one by one fell asleep.

We had thought morning would find us well into Kentucky, but troop-trains are slow, as we soon found out, for it was just dawn when we pulled into the Union station at Columbus, Ohio. The train stopped there long enough for many of us to run up the stairs to the station and buy a few post-cards, magazines and candy. There were a few moments of conversation with waiting travelers who clustered at the car windows to wish us luck and a pleasant journey, and we were off.

Before nightfall we had wormed our way through the Cincinnati yards and crossed the Ohio river. The train halted on a siding

for some time on the Kentucky side, so we had plenty of time to bid our home state silent farewell, and put our last "eyeful" of her in our little store of memories. When at last the wild Kentucky hills shut off our view as we moved slowly south out of Covington, we resolutely turned from thoughts of home to enjoy the ever-changing view of the new country.

From then on our journey was crowded with interesting scenery and at every station and town the troop train resembled a "mad-house." From every window hung three or four men, shouting or singing, or emitting shrill whistles and "cat-calls" to the vast entertainment of the civilians, who gave us a hearty welcome everywhere. It would be futile to attempt to record the mass of interesting occurrences in detail. Each man will have no difficulty in remembering his own share.

At last, on the morning of the twenty-ninth, the fourth day, we reached Montgomery, Alabama, and, a few miles further on the train stopped in the open country. We gazed eagerly out of the windows, but no very pleasant prospect greeted us. It was raining steadily and the air was chilly,—nothing could be seen but a vast expanse of brown, grassy pasture land, fields of dead cotton plants, and a reddish-yellow, muddy road that disappeared over a nearby crest.

We detrained in the driving rain, many of us without even a poncho to keep us dry. There seemed to be more than the usual delay in forming up, and of course we were at the tail of the column! Meanwhile we huddled in shivering, dispirited little groups, being ordered to fall out and rest until the regiment passed. Was this the South? If so, where was that perpetual sunshine?

Falling in behind the regiment we started up the muddy road. For a long time no one spoke a word. We were thoroughly disgusted. Suddenly, as we were passing General Zimmerman's headquarters, the quartet began to sing "Ohio." At first there was little support, but gradually the refrain took hold and increased in volume until every man was singing at the top of his voice. We kept it up with other songs and entered Camp Sheridan singing. Those of the "old bunch" who are still with us know that we left it singing.

Finally we came to our portion of the camp and one by one the companies entered their respective streets. As we turned in at

the new mess hall marked "M. G." we gave a rousing cheer. We were assigned to tents and ordered to get busy at once and prepare for the night.

The tents had been put up hastily by "C" company, which had come down a month ahead of the regiment to prepare the camp. Our streets, like all the others, was a slough of mud and little pools of water, there being no drainage whatsoever.

We dug temporary ditches, reinforced the pegs of our tents, drained the interiors as well as possible, and laid a few boards over the mud to provide bridges to our cots. That night, tired beyond description, we went to bed early after eating a cold supper. The wind rose steadily, and by midnight a seventy-two mile an hour gale from the gulf was hitting us with full force. Tents all over the camp were blown down by the dozen, and their occupants forced to take shelter in the mess-halls.

It rained without ceasing for three days, and we were unspeakably miserable, but finally at about noon Sunday the skies cleared and the sun shone with intense heat. Under the influence of its rays our spirits rose and we set about the business of making a good camp of the one-time cotton field.



CUMMINGS - STRASBERY - DONALDSON - CHAPMAN
THAT FAMOUS
MACHINE GUN FOUR

Troop Train Trimmings

Does the girl who got your address from the paper plate you threw out of the train window still write to you, or did she quit when you sent your picture?

Remember the first time we were gassed? Why didn't somebody tell us we were coming to a tunnel?

Did you look out at Lookout Mountain? If you didn't, that's your lookout; but we'll bet there were darned few dames you didn't look out at.

Harry Seaman entertained the officers with a dance of the seven veils—only he had to use a towel. Wonder if 'twas a barber towel? No; it must have been a Turkish towel!!

Old Sarge Byram was a merry old soul on the trip to Sheridan. So were the cooks and K. P.'s. The dill-pickles weren't the only pickles in the kitchen car.

Show us the man "with soul so dead" who didn't try to play Prince Charming with some skirt at some little wayside station!

What became of all the Three Star Hennessy?

Ask Dad,—He knows!

Or Ben,—or Stinkem,—or Denny,—or Brute,—or, well, to tell the truth, Dad isn't the only one who knows—not by a long shot!

Camp Sheridan

The first two weeks at Camp Sheridan were a nightmare of work. We began on the tents, making level floors of packed dirt, deep drainage ditches, and replacing the inadequate pegging with stouter pegs and ropes. Then came the street. Under the direction of Sergeant Warren Smith we labored for a week; tearing out by root the weeds and cotton plants, turning under the rank growth of long grass, crowning the center, raking and grading the sides, cutting curbs and gutters, and bridging the big regimental drainage ditch with heavy planks. Before we were through we swore we were destined to be day laborers for Uncle Sam, not soldiers. We learned afterward that a soldier must be jack-of-all-trades, as well as a fighting man.

Following this first fortnight of unceasing labor came the first week of our training schedule, which was to be of sixteen weeks

duration. Still aching from the back-breaking work we were put to the "school of the soldier," "school of the squad," signaling with flags, practice in carrying verbal messages, and squads "east and west." The weeks went by slowly and our training was plentifully interspersed with such odd jobs as spreading gravel on the street, kitchen and mess-hall, building up the tents with wooden side-walls and frames, and special "details" to the supply company for clothing or rations. The drill-fields had to be weeded and leveled, ditches and trenches dug and filled up again for no apparent reason, and the regular routine of duties performed. But it is not the purpose of this narrative to dwell upon such matters as these. We remember them all too clearly! Suffice to say that before Thanksgiving Day had passed we had become used to drilling day in and day out and had adapted ourselves physically and mentally to the business of soldiering.



Distance lends enchantment, and regretfully we admit that we did not fully appreciate this good old Southern city until after we had left it. During the nine months we were at Camp Sheridan, Montgomery, four miles away, was naturally the Mecca to which all of us flocked for pastime and amusement. Indeed, we went there in such numbers that on Saturdays and Sundays the place looked more like a soldier city than the capital of a state.

It is principally a city of homes, but has also a flourishing business district and a large cotton and fruit market. The large shops, theaters and hotels are conveniently and centrally located, and there are ice cream parlors, billiard parlors, barber shops and stationery stores in plenty. One could find almost anything he desired to buy at some store within five minutes walk of the square. The two best hotels, the Gay-Teague and Exchange, are particularly dear to our memories, for they were as the hub of a wheel,—our congregating and meeting places. We



also remember with interest the Capitol and its old relics of the Civil war, the old soldiers in charge, the brass plate set in the stone step

on the spot where Jefferson Davis was inaugurated, and the beautiful well-kept grounds surrounding the building.

To the people of Montgomery, who welcomed us to their homes and introduced us to their social life, thus making our monotonous training period immeasurably more pleasant, we wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and affection.

Remember the taxi drivers' siren cry? "Going to town!" And if you fell for it and went, what a helluva time you usually had getting another to bring you back?

No wonder we developed into such ferocious soldiers! It riles a man's disposition to pay two-bits to get to town and then either pay four-bits or walk back!

There ought to be a special place in Hell for the Kaiser, the Clown Prince,—and those taxi drivers!

Jack Stirm had the rookies in his tent thinking they were in the clutches of a fresh air fiend. The nights at Sheridan were invariably cold and heavy with dew, but Jack insisted upon rolling up his corner of the tent, and he being the corporal, we could only protest vainly and shiver. Later, we learned that Jack was right. He learned his lesson on the Mexican border. When the "fresh-air orders" of the division came out, old Squad Two was untroubled. We were already veteran "fiends."

Gosh! How we used to cuss the tonsorial artists back of the canteen,—and now we have Greenleaf!

We have never yet found out who got "the gravy" from the regimental canteen.

Nor why it was that when we answered sick call with a sore ankle they invariably gave us C. C.'s.

If the Kaiser had ever stood Reveille every morning for even a month there'd have been no war.



By the way, did you ever stand Reveille early on those dark mornings with only your nightie on underneath your overcoat?

Which reminds us that many a night we went to bed in heavy marching order and put on our pajamas for camouflage.

Saturday afternoon, hot and stuffy within, but heaven compared with the heat of the sun outside the tent. Brute Zellner dolling up to go to town,—familiar footstep. Rear elevation of Brute, hat and necktie in hand, scrambling over the back wall of the tent into "A" Company street. One second later,—Sergeant Chapman sticks his head in at the door. "Two men for gravel detail!"

Moral:—Live and learn.

Remember that the first men to get furloughs were Tepper and Ruff, and how that started us thinking? Shame on you, boys, for disturbing the peace. Even the officers got the bug.

One painful memory is that of the band, practicing in skirmish line in Headquarters tents. Here a boom,—there a squeak,—here and there a squawk! squawk!

Just when we wanted to write a nice letter to our girl, too.



Things We Hated

The band.
Reveille.
Policing the street.
Kitchen police.
Latrine police.
"Gimme a cigarette" (twenty times a day from the same dude).
Compulsory formations for church on Sunday.
Squads right and left.
Gas mask drill.
Wood detail.
Delinquency sheets.
Washing clothes.
"No mail for you."
Saturday inspections.
One gallon of dish-water for 140 men.
School in the mess-hall every night.
W-O-R-K-!

Things We Liked

Letters from home.
Retreat without a parade.
Pay day.
Mess—sometimes.
A box of cookies, cake or fudge from our girl.
To get out of a detail by hook or crook—preferably by crook.
Furloughs.
Baths—most of us.
Montgomery girls—(not the dark kind).
Candy!

Division Review

December 24th, 1917

At this, our first important review, Governor Cox of Ohio was the guest of honor. After the collapse of the Christmas furlough plan, which caused such great disappointment both at home and among the soldiers, he had declared his intention of visiting Ohio's volunteers in person, and proposed the famous "Christmas Special" scheme to the people of Ohio. They responded enthusiastically as we well know, and he came to us with a special trainload of Christmas packages.

We marched from our camp by way of the old race-track road to the site of the camp of the Military Police, where we halted until

we could enter our position in the parade. Then, led by the band, we turned in at the division parade ground and the regiment passed the reviewing stand by companies in company front. It was a bright sunny day, and the people had turned out in large numbers to see us; most of them from Montgomery, but also a great many Ohioans, —relatives, friends and sweethearts. They were not only overflowing onto the parade ground, but were massed all along the line of march, which led through the artillery camp and back up the main road along the new street car line.

At the entrance to our camp Colonel Stanbury reviewed the regiment as we passed in column of squads. Then, to our great relief, we reached our company street and were dismissed for the afternoon.

Christmas Eve

To celebrate this great occasion in the best possible manner, most of us went to town. Montgomery, slow and sedate though it seemed to us then, was crowded with soldiers and their relatives and an unusual number of citizens of the town itself (both black and white). The city was ablaze with lights, hotels and shops were overflowing, ice cream parlors swamped with business, and the movies turning away more people than were already inside. Taxi after taxi and car after car unloaded scores of soldiers in the square and hundreds more streamed in on foot, compelled to walk for lack of transportation. It was a gay night.

A few remained at camp, preferring to spend the evening quietly in the tents or at the various Y. M. C. A. huts, where entertainment of all sorts was provided. The camp theater drew more than even its usual great crowd. No matter where we went we all had our full share of Christmas cheer. But need it be said that in the hearts of most of us, when we crawled into our bunks that night was a vague longing and a dull ache,—an uncomfortable homesickness?

Christmas Day

With its usual perversity the weather changed over night, and we awoke Christmas morning to the dismal prospect of a rainy, chilly day; nor did it change to the better for a single moment,—nothing but leaden sky, drizzling rain, dripping tents and muddy streets were our portion. But even though the weather went back on us, we enjoyed ourselves. The boxes from home that came on Governor Cox's train were delivered in the morning, and the Red Cross also played Santa Claus with a bursting package for each man.

Most of us had letters in large numbers from home and friends,

and for days afterward letters and delayed packages kept streaming in. There were special entertainments at the "Y" huts and theater. Sergeant Byram and the cooks came across with a big feed. As for candy,—we were overloaded with it, and having eaten until we were deliciously stuffed and on the verge of illness, we still had sufficient to last us a week.

With our new philosophy of "pack all your troubles in your old kit bag and smile," that our short experience as soldiers had inculcated in us, we speedily forgot our little touch of "blues," caused by the disappointment of the Christmas furlough fiasco, and retired at "taps," with our stomachs and hearts content and overflowing with Christmas cheer.

New Year's Day—1918

While not such an occasion for merry-making as Christmas, the New Year was ushered in with unusual noise and commotion. Not a few taxis left camp with a string of cans rattling behind. Most everyone who had been to town came back loaded with fire-crackers and torpedoes, creating continuous pandemonium until after midnight, regardless of consequences, and caring not a whit for the "cussings" they received from the peaceful ones who were in their bunks.

Of course, there were the usual good resolutions, quickly made and soon forgotten, and a good deal of half-serious conjecturing as to the future. What a light-hearted beginning it was for a year that proved so heavily laden with events that shook the very foundations of the world and moulded our own lives anew!

Christmas Cracks

What happened to the furlough money we begged from home after the Christmas furlough deal?

Governor Cox was a regular Santa. He didn't have whiskers, or a red nose, or a red coat with white fur trimmings, or reindeers and a sleigh, but he had a trainload of gifts and a message of good cheer; yes,—and the proverbial Santa Claus "bay window," too!

No wonder we need chaplains in the army.

Who could act like a Christian on Christmas Eve when he had to walk half-way to town to get a taxi, or take the other alternative of hanging on to a street car by some comrade's coat tails,—and then pay fifty cents to some highway robber to bring him back to camp?

Say, Humpy Turner,—remember when somebody threw a fire-cracker into the tent New Year's Eve, and it lit so close to the nether portions of Tige that he thought it was a rearguard attack meant for him, and nearly tore Scott's bunk to pieces? Also that you threw a shoe at him and broke our only electric light bulb?

Wonder why the boys' mothers all got sick just before Christmas?

Did you keep on praying for "The Army and Navy Forever" when they told you there would be no Christmas furloughs?

It seems as though Old Jupe Pluvius has always had it in for us. Durned if we ever knew it to fail to rain on a holiday!

A good many dudes resolved to get married pretty sudden around Christmas and New Year's.

Guess the sick-mother gag was overworked!

The Hike to the Artillery Range

March 18th, 1918.

Everyone of us has his own pet recollections of that first trip to the trenches at the artillery range. The regiment left camp early in the afternoon and, after a hike of an hour and a half, arrived at the "positions." All except the first relief pitched pup tents in the "back area." It had rained hard, and the trench system was one mass of mud.

In order to simulate actual conditions we did not occupy the positions until after nightfall. All of us wore gas masks and helmets. We waded and slipped and struggled up trenches in mud that was two and a half feet deep in many places. Conditions were worse than we ever experienced before or after; even in France.

Each relief remained in the trenches four hours, and not being injured to the wet mud and penetrating cold night air, we were half-froze and unutterably wretched before the 146th Infantry arrived, two hours late. Then, when we prepared to evacuate the area and begin the march back to camp, there resulted endless confusion of men, wagons, mules, machine-gun carts and scattered equipment. In our company the shelter-halves and campaign hats, which we had left behind at the entry to the positions, were hopelessly mixed and we had to snatch them up indiscriminately.

It was four o'clock in the morning when we arrived, cold, dirty and hungry. After the mules and carts had been put away we were

given a fine breakfast of bread and jam, coffee and slum, and then excused until noon.

Jimmy Wilson and Jack Stirm were wiser than the rest. No premature trench life for them; they concluded to postpone it until they reached France, and camouflaged themselves in a dark pup-tent and snoozed until we returned.

It was not for lack of government mules that many a man pulled a cart that night! It was for lack of government harness!

All the nice new hats and shelter-halves changed hands in the mixup of equipment. Talk about cattle-rustlers and changing brands! It would have taken a cattle-country sheriff and posse to round up and identify those hats and shelter-halves.

No one got extra duty for snoozing in school that afternoon. That's about the only time we enjoyed school in the mess-hall.

First Trip to the Machine Gun Range

March 20th, 1918

We left camp at 7:30 A. M. and hiked out the road over Peanut Hill, across old cotton fields and winding lanes, to a deep cut or gulch on the street car line. Here was located the old Alabama Rifle Range, which had been hurriedly adapted for use as a machine gun range. The targets were set at the base of a steep, bare hillside about fifty feet in height. Extending from the butts for over a thousand yards was a long, green vista of cleared land; a uniform strip bordered by the tall pine forest on either side. The range had been used in the days gone by for lang-range rifle practice. We did our firing, however, at close range (1000 inches), and on special targets; the main object being to teach us control of the gun in traversing and searching fire. We all enjoyed the novelty of our first experience with the guns and considered it a very interesting day; doubly so because we had the opportunity of observing a test of the new Browning automatic rifle by a group of Ordnance Department officers.

O. D. Larky was afraid of the gun and didn't want to fire it.

"Nope! Nope! I allus wuz leery of guns. Never had one in my life."

"Come on, Larky," coaxed D. P., smiling.

"Uh-uh!" demurred Larky. "I couldn't stand it, Lieutenant. I'm too nervous. Couldn't you lemme lead a mule or sumpin'?"

"Mules are more dangerous than that gun, Larky. Get up there and be quick about it!"

Very gingerly O. D. sat down to the gun, hesitated a moment, and then, closing his eyes, blazed away, apparently about to collapse from fright. Later one of the sergeants asked him how he liked it. Larky scratched his head,—

"Well, I guess I'm a bigger dam fool than Steve M'Glone! He was just a dam fool enough to get out of the army, but I laid it on so thick that D. P. got wise to me!"

Remember how good that lemonade and the jelly sandwiches tasted?

Hike to the Montgomery Hunt Club

April 3rd, 1918

This hike was our first gruelling experience at cross-country marching. While it is very true that we were in no danger, that does not alter the fact that it required as much "guts" to stick it out on that hike as we ever had to have to face an artillery barrage. The brand of "guts" was different, perhaps, but the will to hang on against all odds, to "stick in spite of Hell," is the foundation of courage, and the wells of our courage were sorely tried that day.

It was intensely hot and the roads were deep with powdery dust. Leaving camp at 7:00 A. M., we hiked steadily until 11:00 o'clock, marching fifty minutes and resting ten minutes of each hour. Our route was circuitous, leading up over Peanut Hill and through divers lanes and by-roads to the outskirts of Montgomery, there doubling back past the Remount Station and the Base Hospital and on out the Upper Wetumpka Road. Then we began to feel the first signs of fatigue. No smoking was permitted even at the halts, so most of us had to forego that solace. We were forbidden to drink from our canteens, as only one canteen of water was to be consumed during the day, and the parching dust lodged in our nostrils and throats, producing an almost unbearable irritation. Our shoulders, unused to the new packs, began to ache, more from the cramped position than the weight. Our feet began to blister under the unaccustomed strain. We were unfeignedly glad when at 11:00 o'clock we debouched into a ploughed field for mess and a couple of hours of rest.

After some minutes of standing around we were permitted to fall out, and unslinging the galling packs, we sought resting places in the dry, hard furrows. Permission was given to eat and drink and we fell to with a will.

In a sort of blind stagger we mechanically dragged through the hour of meaningless "maneuvers" on the nearby hunt-club

grounds. We had no interest in battles with imaginary enemies that day. At about 2:30 P. M. we slung our packs and formed up for the weary march back to camp, already exhausted by the efforts of the morning and doubting our ability to continue for long.

It was a heart-breaking job. The rays of the descending sun, seeming doubly hot and scorching, were directly in our eyes or reflected by the white road. A slight breeze stirring merely blew the dust up into our faces; the air we inhaled was laden with it, and there was no relief, for most of us had unwisely drunk all our water at noon. Perhaps it was only "play" in a camp far from the battle fronts, but nevertheless our sufferings were real and well nigh unbearable. Men from the line companies fell out along the roadside like flies, their number increasing with each mile. Our mules were exhausted and their leaders virtually had to drag them by main force.

Only one man fell out of ranks in the Machine Gun Company, thus marring an otherwise perfect record. He fell out only two hundred yards from the company street to get a drink of water. Small things are great indicators. We refrain from mentioning his name, but are satisfied that he is no longer a member of the company. Aside from that, we demonstrated conclusively that we were a company with "guts."

Were you one of the wise ones who refrained from drinking all their water, and were pestered by the thirsty, but improvident, all the way back to camp?

Remember the grand rush for the hydrants at the bath-house when we were dismissed? The word "water" had a new meaning to us.

Lt. Tilden—"Now, we are in a precarious position. The enemy is on our front and flanks and is preparing to counter-attack. It is up to us to protect the flanks and it will be very difficult, as they are massing in great numbers. We must hold them at all costs!"

Mac (grumbling)—"Costs be damned! Charge 'em on the payroll like they do everything else. I'm goin' to sleep."

Third Liberty Loan Parade

April 6th, 1918

On the sixth of April we ushered in the Third Liberty Loan, and celebrated the anniversary of the entrance of America into the war with a Divisional Parade in Montgomery. It was an auspicious day for *parading*, from the standpoint of the spectators, who massed

to view us all along our route through town. The southern sun shone from a clear blue sky and a very slight breeze was blowing,— enough to cool those watching from the automobiles and windows and balconies of office buildings and hotels, and even the compact crowds on the sidewalks and street corners, but affording no relief to the khaki-clad stream that flowed steadily over the hot cobblestones.

Montgomery was swathed in loan-posters, flags and bunting. In the reviewing stand were Major General Treat, the Governor of Alabama, a number of French officers, and many other noted men. Even under the stress of the heat and the fatigue of our long hike into town, which had been augmented by frequent double timing to keep closed up, we passed the stand in good order and at good "attention."

Following the parade there was a flag-raising at the State Capitol, accompanied by music from a special military band. It was made the occasion for several Liberty Loan speeches. In this, however, we did not take part, but thankfully trudged back to camp, content to call it "a day."

"Parades was made for generals and such guys," says O. D. Larky. "They want to show their wives that they kin boss somebody around, too."

Yes, we suppose it really was an inspiring sight to see rank after rank of riflemen in platoon front mounting Dexter avenue hill toward the Capitol. The dark mass of the crowds along the sidewalks under the blossoming trees, and the serried, broad ribbon of olive-drab undoubtedly must have made a pretty contrast. But,— it's far from inspiring to be in those ranks, marching at attention!

One of the boys heard a sweet young thing (we suppose she was) remark as our company passed the reviewing stand: "I wonder why they keep looking at the men in front of them?"

Now ain't that just like a woman? We would have liked to look at her, but Cap Chambers was looking at us!

Which reminds us that one bird did look around. (We don't blame him, for he said she had on a "Hi-lo" gown and black silk openwork stockings)—and next morning he carried the G. I. cans.

Larky had a day of unusual surprises one Saturday in February. He got up late for reveille and wasn't bawled out or given extra duty! Nobody "picked on him" while he was eating breakfast. *He discovered he was on stable detail and didn't have to drill;*

went to work willingly, got too near Number 18 mule,—and “came to” in the infirmary!

Rumor, February 20th—“C” Company is under orders to be ready to move within three weeks. (Note.—Must have come from the thirteenth hole.)

Rumor, February 21st—According to an “orderly in the 8th” we move within a month.

One night the quartet sang “The Sailor’s Life is the Life for Me” so realistically that the top-kick got sea-sick. And the next day Morrie Cummings had the hard luck to sing through the kitchen screen door and strain his voice!

(Aw, give us a new one!)

We now realize that army life in Cleveland was the juice of the orange and camp life the rind.

Skipper apparently like truthful men, but they make non-coms of the cheerful liars.

Fowler was having a horrible dream. He turned on his cot—the night was real hot. In his dream on a saw-log he floated downstream. He strove to roll off the drifting beam, for it floated head on for a rasping big saw. The noise in his ears agonized him with fears, and he breathed a farewell to his Maw and his Paw. As the buzzing thing reached him he woke in great fright. (Now, friend Murrel Fowler is quite a loud howler). But the buzzing ran on through the soft, stilly night. And he saw it came forth from the nose of C. White!

—VAN.

Does anyone remember what happened to Seaman when he was suddenly taken with Kidney Trouble? The guards had to work overtime, but he was cured within a week.

Clank Williams, our company lady-killer, admits having lost out with one skirt. “Then when she had me all ribbed up and done to a turn,” said Clank to Wallie, “she says, ‘I love Mr. O’Toole and Mr. O’Toole loves me. Goodbye, Bill, take care of yourself.’ I couldn’t have gotten a better jolt on the B. & O.”

Vic—“Where’s the hammer, Dainus?”

Frank—“I don’t know where is hammer. Hammer was here a minute ago.”

Remember the time poor old Donaldson and Franklin McClain were "busted" for buying bananas?

We wonder if Sam Salzman will ever be normal or if Roney will have to hit him again with a pick.

The delinquency sheet:

Seaman
Shiffman
Boyd
Seaman

(Encore—ad infinitum.)

On again, off again, gone again—Vic Norris' mustache!

Wonder if Sergeant Hull still has his famous nightie and cap,—and how Lieutenant Sprague would have looked in them?

Only a word is necessary to bring to mind that second trip to the artillery trenches, when we were in them from 4 P. M., April 11th, to 7 P. M., April 12th—HELL.

And then on Saturday, April 13th, we had a field inspection over on the race track. Sherman was right!

And then on Sunday, April 14th, instead of resting, we had to put up blanket racks. God help the Kaiser!!

The Five Day Hike

April 17th to April 21st

While this extended hike was a great endurance test, it was not nearly so hard on us as the one-day Hunt Club hike. We were more accustomed to the packs and our feet toughened to a greater extent. Furthermore, we did not cover nearly so many miles per day. The entire 73rd Brigade participated.

Leaving camp by way of the Base Hospital, we turned to the right a short distance beyond and then to the left at the cross-roads in the woods, swinging onto the road to the Hunt Club. It was delightful weather for hiking, cool and cloudy, and we made our allotted seven miles with ease, pitching pup-tent camp at noon in a field near the Hunt Club. The afternoon was spent in ditching the tents, gathering brush for beds and putting up the kitchen. After mess we retired. It was a novelty for most of us, this sleeping in pup-tents, and as though the gods were intent upon giving us a full *experience*, it rained heavily during the night, with the inevitable

result that a number of the men got wet because they had failed to peg and ditch their tents properly.

The second day was much more difficult. Our unusual beds and the fury of the storm had robbed us of our customary amount of sleep, the roads were muddy, making marching difficult, and our water-soaked clothing and packs gave added trouble. After struggling ten miles under these conditions we were glad indeed when we reached Taylor Aviation Field, even though we had to make camp in oozy, sticky mud that clung to our clothing and shoes, and encumbered our shovels when it came to digging drainage trenches. We spent a miserable night.

We rested the entire next day on the spot. A Y. M. C. A. tent was set up, and furnished paper and envelopes for those who desired to write, music from a small graphophone, and tobacco, apples and cigarettes. Many men gained entrance to the aviation field and raided the camp canteen for pop and candy, or amused themselves watching the work and tests going on in the hangars.

The following day, Saturday, we broke camp early and hiked about ten miles further, doubling back towards Montgomery over a different road. It was a trying, but more cheerful hike, for the sun was shining brightly, drying the roads. Our camp that night was in a broad, gently rolling pasture of clover, that had been nibbled close by the cattle. It looked inviting and proved the opposite; hard, damp and uncomfortable. To make matters worse, it rained and was very cold that night, with the result that very few of us slept.

Early Saturday morning we ate breakfast in the half-light of a cold, wet, gray dawn, policed the camp, and moved out on the last lap back to camp. It was a dirty, tired and utterly disillusioned gang that plodded through the outskirts of the city and on out the hilly road to Sheridan. This was our first test of the real business of soldiering. But what a difference music makes! At the top of Peanut Hill we were met by the band. At the first strains of "Over There" our troubles were forgotten; our return became a triumphal march.

The wood-detail brought back more candy than wood from the aviation camp.

The long-boys in those pup-tents had a lot of trouble keeping their "tootsies" dry. If the good Lord hadn't turned up so much for feet on most of them they'd have been wet to the knees.

Vic Norris, in charge of the picket line detail, was nearly distracted. Just when his boys would get things cleaned up nicely the mules would be driven from the watering place and tied up again.

In our company no pup-tent partnership was complete without an argument over which one should bum a shovel from some infantry man.

Heard often in the wee hours of the morning: "Dammit! Quit swipin' the blankets!"

A pup tent's a rather small place to entertain ladies in.

Necessity is the mother of invention. Sylvia had a helluva time for awhile, but finally got to sleep in the form of a letter "S"; but even that idea didn't keep Scott's feet dry, so he got a packing case from the kitchen and stuck them in that.

Tommy (sticking his head out of the pup-tent)—"Gosh! I might as well have enlisted in the navy!"

Remember how much more we appreciated that delivery of mail on the hike than any we'd had at camp?

Sometimes it's not so soft to be a cook; especially on a hike like that, when all you've got is a dinky little field-range.

Pretty soft for those birds who returned from their furloughs the day after we left camp. They didn't even have hot water ready in the bath-house when we got back.

Remember the afternoon of April 29th, when we went to the pistol range, and it rained? Lieutenant Wedow drove up in his car with our slickers. We sure appreciated his thoughtfulness.

On May 1st we had a battle on Peanut Hill which lasted until noon. We did noble work,—chased the blinkin' enemy darn near to Montgomery.

Remember the big fire the night of May 1st? Corporal Scott jumped out of bed and heroically blew his little whistle.

Shaps forgot how to count off, and the Skipper nearly "tore him down."

The cooks beat it to the fire with nothing but overcoats and shoes on.

And finally when we did get formed up and, water pails in hand, double-timed over to the Coliseum, we found that it was the piles of hay and straw burning and that the division fire department had it *under control*.

And then they slapped a lot of fire-drills on us and ran us around camp with full pails of water, to put out imaginary fires, until our tongues were hanging out.

“Simulate”—that’s the word! Next thing we know we’ll have a simulated pay-day.

On Friday, May 10th, our beloved foot-lockers went to the wood-pile and we were reduced to the use of barrack-bags.

Monday, May 20th, we turned in our cots and most of us slacked the canvas and slept on top of the tents. Next day the canvas of the tents was struck and the barrack-bags went to the train. We had our choice of sleeping on the oily tent floors or out in the street. The wise ones made hammocks of their shelter-halves and slung them from the rafters.

Camp Sheridan to Lee

May 22nd-24th, 1918

At last! We had about come to the conclusion that we were to be marooned at Camp Sheridan for the period of the war when we suddenly got orders to move. Our departure was carried out quietly and with no vain regrets at the prospect. We entrained about 9:00 P. M. the evening of May 22nd, with only our less-fortunate comrades of the artillery-brigade to bid us farewell. Although it had not been officially announced, everyone knew that our destination was Camp Lee, Petersburg, Virginia. The trip was monotonous and uneventful. As we look back we find that our main impression was that day-coaches and three-in-a-seat-sleeping accommodations were a deuce of a come-down from the Pullmans in which we came to Sheridan.

Camp Lee

May 24th-June 14th, 1918

Camp Lee is a much larger cantonment than Camp Sheridan, and being a National Army Camp the troops are quartered in wooden buildings, or barracks. It is well laid out, the barracks being built in regimental groups along both sides of a wide cement main avenue. The grounds, however, are absolutely devoid of vegetation, and as the soil is of a sandy nature, the slightest breeze

raises a miniature sand-storm. All around the camp are broad parade and drill fields, and at one point a complete trench system has been built, which extends several miles back into the woods. The camp also has a large library and a fine theater. It has excellent car service to the city of Petersburg and a small amusement park nearby.

"Where's the strike?"—the greeting we received at Camp Lee. To this may be traced the Lakemont Park battle, the discomfiture of the Petersburg M. P.'s, and our nickname—"The Black-Hand Division."

Did it ever occur to you to compare canvas cots to spring beds? Barracks and spring beds! Imagine that for "Strike-Breakers."

Why did we hang around the Hostess House so much? Let thy conscience be thy guide!

Sunday, June 9th, Lieutenant Wedow disappeared right under our noses, and Captain Wedow greeted us. That night we had ice cream and cake for dessert, and although nobody said so, we know the Skipper was at the bottom of it. Congratulations, Captain Wedow!

Coming from Sheridan to Lee was like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. Phew! Wasn't it hot?

We discovered at Camp Lee that Smileage Books were good for something!

Petersburg:—Half the size of Montgomery; half as interesting; half as friendly to us; in a word—pretty darned slow!

The editor of that Petersburg "Squeal" must have had a son in the N. A.

Camp Lee to Hoboken

June 11th-12th, 1918

Having been in readiness for a week to depart on short notice, we made our exit from Camp Lee with very little bustle or con-

fusion; boarding the train at 5:30 P. M. Tuesday, June 11th, and pulling out about an hour later. Officially we had not been informed of our destination, but it was rumored universally to be Camp Merritt, New Jersey. Except for a beautiful moonlight view of the National Capitol as we passed through Washington, and the picturesque, well ordered, homelike character of the seaboard country, our journey was not markedly different from the others we had made. It would be mere repetition to recount the usual troop-train amusements in which we indulged. There were the customary card-games, crap-games and songs and the same hanging out of windows, shouting and whistling at every stop.

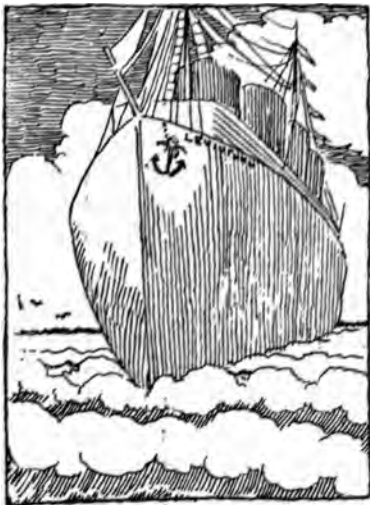
Wednesday, June 12th, we were treated to an astounding surprise. Instead of finding ourselves in Camp Merritt, we detrained in the Lackawanna Station at Hoboken. Here we marched without delay into a large waiting room, and, stripping to the waist, received our final overseas physical examination. Events crowded one another so quickly that it was bewildering. In almost less time than it takes to tell it, we were shunted through the station and onto a ferryboat, ferried up the river and docked at the slips where several great liners were tied up. Then came a very aggravating delay of several hours in the receiving rooms of the wharf where the U. S. S. Leviathan lay tied up; a delay that seemed very irksome to us in our keyed-up condition. Its only redeeming feature was the serving of hot coffee and buns by women of the Red Cross.

At last, at about dusk, we got aboard the Leviathan and were assigned our quarters for the voyage. We occupied the two lowest decks in the bow of the great liner,—“G” and “H” forward,—the latter being almost at the water line. The bunks were numbered and arranged in tiers of three, and each man upon passing over the gangplank received a card bearing his deck and bunk number. To avoid confusion we were ordered to remain in our bunks for the rest of the night. No permission was given to wander about ship or go up on the open decks, but this measure was hardly necessary, as the majority of us, weary in mind and body, were quite content to climb into our bunks and sleep.

The Leviathan

This great transport of ours, the U. S. S. Leviathan, was formerly the German liner Vaterland, one of the many German ships

seized after the break in diplomatic relations between Germany and the United States, and later converted into carriers of troops.



Her engines and boilers had been badly damaged before her crew departed, and evidently Germany believed the damage done to these vital parts would be irreparable. American ingenuity overcame them, and she put to sea again, not only in perfect condition, but capable of greater speed than she had ever before attained. She was, and still is, the largest ship in the world,— nine hundred and fifty-four feet long, one hundred feet in beam, with a displacement of sixty-nine thousand tons. Her armament consisted of big, six-inch, naval guns, bow and stern, and she was camouflaged from water line to stacks with broad, zigzag stripes

of blue, black and dull gray. Probably our most vivid impression of her was gained while we were waiting in the docks prior to embarkation. Her massive proportions seemed to dwarf all other nearby shipping; even the great docks and warehouses seemed smaller because of her proximity, and man became a nonentity. The great ship seemed possessed of a personality. Though the creation of man, she gave the paradoxical impression that their comings and goings aboard her were subject to her domination, not she to theirs.

New York to Brest

June 15th-June 22nd

On the morning of Saturday, June 15th, our third day aboard, we had our first "Abandon Ship Drill," and great was our surprise when we reached the open decks and found that we were moving! We must have been moving for some time for the harbor laid behind us, and there, close by, loomed the Statue of Liberty! So great was the ship and so evenly did she lay on her keel that, but for the testimony of our eyes, we would not have believed our voyage had begun; down in the vessel's bowels not even a tremor had reached us. At exactly noon we passed Liberty, and with hats off and a peculiar clutch at our throats, bade *farewell to our home-land*; never before had she been so dear to *us*. Then, after that brief farewell, we were ordered below, and

when next permitted on deck, after the afternoon mess, we were out of sight of land; nothing in view but the boundless blue ocean, shimmering in the golden light of the lowering sun, the white, foamy "wash" from the ship's bows in an ever-widening track behind her; a single destroyer chasing back and forth in great half-circles before her, and far head a dirigible balloon watching the green depths below for enemy submarines.

Once the glamour and excitement of new experience had worn off, life settled again into routine and the days slipped by slowly. Our confinement to certain portions of the ship became irksome; there was no satisfaction in lying in our bunks down in the dark lower decks, and little amusement could be gained on the crowded open deck,—not even cloudy weather or a rough sea came to relieve the ennui that seemed to grip everything. Occasionally a tramp-steamer was sighted, arousing a ripple of interest; in one case the Leviathan slackened speed while the destroyer chased off to investigate the stranger and then returned, apparently satisfied, to continue our course. On the third day even the destroyer left us and we were absolutely alone, with only the long "wireless" aerial to indicate that we were still in touch with the world.

On the night of the seventh day out we were ordered to sleep with all our clothes on, as we had entered the submarine danger-zone. With a few dry remarks and jokes that showed a faint undercurrent of apprehension, we retired. However, no "subs" came our way, and at 1:00 P. M. the next day, Saturday, June 22nd, we sighted land. Land! It was like meeting a long-lost friend, and we strained our eyes to gather in every detail of this new country. Was it England or France? We knew not; but Rumor (inseparable part of the army that she is) said it was Brest, France, and Rumor was right. At 3:00 o'clock the Leviathan anchored in the pretty, land-locked harbor of that port; a harbor sheltering many other great transports, old style sailing vessels, and innumerable small craft of every type and description.

We had been in readiness to debark several hours before



the tugs or ferries came to take us off. Our company was among the first to be landed and we made the short trip to the dock just as the sun was setting, bathing the land and sea in golden light. As the ferry tied up to the wharf and prepared to discharge her human freight, we received our first greeting in France; small boys in dories and flat bottomed rowboats surrounded us, and from all sides came the cries, "Gimme a see-garette!" "Gimme a penny!" Our national reputation for generosity had preceded us, borne by the thousands of khaki-clad Americans who had landed here before.

We saw little indeed of the city of Brest; only the wharves, railroad yards and that portion which lay along our route became part of our ever increasing store of memories and experiences. The company was hastily formed along a spur of track and shortly thereafter we fell in line with the regiment and proceeded up the long hill through the town toward our camping ground in the open country. It was a late hour and darkness was settling fast, so we saw few civilians, although indeed there were more "kids" hanging to the skirts of the column, begging for pennies and cigarettes, than we relished.—That novelty began to wear off.—Once clear of the town we halted on the road and fell out along a high hedge to eat the sandwiches and cake that had been issued to us before we left the boat, but even here we were not at peace. "Donnez moi, sil-vous-plait" was still with us!

We marched three miles through the cold, heavy mist that was rolling in from the sea, and finally pitched pup-tents haphazard in a wet field, which had evidently been used for the same purpose before. This was the "Rest Camp" we had heard about where we were to rest and clean up for a few days! The morning sun revealed a chaos of confusion that the night had shrouded; pup-tents set at random, equipment scattered everywhere, and piles of rations and field kitchen impedimenta lying on the ground. Everything was cold and soaked with dew, but under the enlivening influence of the sun we set about the business of "straightening up" with a will, and by noon had produced an orderly, clean encampment. When the work was done and we had messed, we found time to look about us and realize that this was Sunday, and our first day in France.

The surrounding country was mostly pastureland, squared off in one-acre plots by tall, untrimmed hedges, and of rolling, hilly character. There were a few high-gabled, red-tile roofed, whitewashed stone houses within sight, but apparently the land *was devoted solely* to dairy farms as indicated by the small

herds of cows. In the distance could be seen a couple of church spires, marking the sites of villages. Aside from our camp, however, there was nothing in the entire scene to indicate that we were in a war-torn land.

"Git off of them winches!"

That major at the foot of "D" deck stairs: "All right; let's go! One, two, three, four! One, two, three, four!"

Going and coming to mess took up most of the day. It was one grand rush! Slowly, slowly, we struggled through the hot, fetid, center troop-decks in long lines, then plunged four abreast down the mess hall stairs into the chaos below, and past steaming boilers of food to the tables. Having bolted the "eats" we took another plunge into the swirling throng in the superheated dish-washing room, and fought our way to the open air of the upper deck. What a relief!

Spence Coleman and Lee Kurfis couldn't stand confinement any longer. "B" deck drew them as the magnet draws iron-filings. Colonel Merrill (nuisance to pleasure seeking privates) spotted them.—Extra duty for the remainder of the voyage!

Had it ended there they couldn't have complained, but the sergeants seemed to think they were on extra duty for the duration of the war!

(Corporal Hull down in "H-4" every morning.) "Get up! Everybody get up." Listen to the birdie, boys!

George Tepper was guard for a day or so near the first-sergeants' mess-room, and lived a life of ease and plenty. He palmed himself off as a first sergeant every meal with complete success.



Raines made enough money selling candy to enable him to retire from the barber business.

Carlin "five-fingered" a "B" deck pass from the officers' mess-hall. Where there's a will there's a way!

Guess Lieutenants Fri and Smith had a hell of a time keeping order on their respective troop-decks. It was like trying to sit on a bees' nest to keep the bees in,—bound to get stung!

They stuck poor Pap Southworth on guard down near the galley, and then forgot where his post was. Pap, faithful soldier that he is, stayed on all night.

Lt. Fri—"Men! This noise must stop! Taps has blown! (Noise continues.) Corporal Shiffman, you will see to it that the men maintain silence!"

Well, that was easy enough for Ben! He was the one making all the racket!

Remember that sea-water hose bath we had up on "B" deck?

Now that we look back, it is amusing to note that they took us to town in squads to let us lap up a little booze,—light wine at that. Wonder what would happen if they tried that stunt now?

With due dignity, and an eye for the dramatic effect, the Colonel announced on June 24th that we were to leave for the battle front, and be held as reserves to be used in an emergency. How thrilling!

That reminds us that, judging by the angle of his cute little "come to Jesus" cap, the Colonel had a snootful of that light wine himself.

"Well," says Thomas Bruce. "There have been some famous men in this great war and they have rendered some great services, *but it would be a shame to forget that "Stand-to" Roush served as one of the K. P.'s on the Leviathan. He says he's never been hungry since.*"

Lessiter tells us that when we were ordered to clean up our mess kits for inspection at Brest, he was looking around for some rags and saw Jesse Chisnell industriously at work. "Where did you get all the good rags, Jesse?" "Oh, just a pair of dirty socks I happened to have," replied the long-boy.



Brest to Goncourt

June 23th-June 28th

We broke camp on Tuesday, June 25th, at 4:00 A. M., although we could hardly see the necessity of rising at that hour to stand around and shiver while the "powers that be" fussed over minor details. But c'est l'armee! After the usual amount of "dilly-dallying" we were at last formed in column of squads and marched into Brest, arriving at the railhead about 8:00 o'clock. More standing around with packs on was our portion before we entrained,—a period in which we had ample time to look over our side-door Pullmans.

We saw before us a long string of dinky box-cars on siding: the same famous "Hommes-40, Chevaux-8" wagons of which Arthur Guy Empey has told the world. We had read of them and knew what to expect, but the actual sight of them was an awful jolt. Was it possible that we were to ride in those frail, ill-smelling, four-wheeled little cattle-cars? A self-respecting American steer would have rebelled at the prospect! "At last," we told one another, "we have reached the lowest ebb of transportation,—from 'Pullmans' to this!" But the worst was yet to come,—later in our experience we encountered trucks.

When at last we were herded, forty in a car, we began to realize the difficulties before us if the trip should prove very long. A crude set of benches had been constructed with a supposed seating capacity of forty men; in reality scarcely thirty could manage to squeeze in. If they had been constructed as a sop to our injured American ideas of comfort they failed ignominiously in their object, for by night we were cussing them heartily and were strongly tempted to tear them out and cast them from the car.

The beauty of the country through which we were passing temporarily caused us to forget our troubles. Here, indeed were

scenes well worth looking at; quaint villages, mere clusters of a dozen white stone houses around a stone church, were scattered at intervals of about three miles, their red tile roofs gleaming brightly in the sunshine against the fresh green of the hedges and fields; white roads wound through them and disappeared over the hills; at each crossing of the railroad was a gatekeeper's lodge and garden, choked with flowers and growing vegetables.

At one point we passed over a high bridge spanning a deep cut in which, directly below us, nestled a town of quite large size, whose main street was a sluggish canal which flowed between low stone walls. Several barges and canal boats were tied up at the wharves, but there was apparently little traffic, as the tow-path seemed littered and grass-grown from disuse.

When night came and we could no longer find amusement at the car doors, our real troubles began. We had messed on cold victuals,—“Willie,” bread and tomatoes,—and felt unsatisfied as a result. There began a ceaseless squirming and turning, grunting and growling, fervent outbursts of cussing, as we tried to maneuver our tangled bodies and legs into at least semi-comfortable positions. Alas! it was an impossibility; we succeeded only in snatching sleep at odd moments as the endless night wore on. So that those near the car doors might find relief from the cold night air, it was necessary to close them, and by morning, like that of a prison, the atmosphere was foul with the reek of its former occupants, the cattle, and vitiated by the breathing of forty human beings. A small few of us, preferring wakefulness and fresh air to stifling within, found refuge in the brakeman's towers outside.

After three days of this sort of traveling, slow at the best and further delayed by frequent stops and lay-overs on sidings, we entered a very mountainous country and passed through numerous tunnels. Our route from Brest had led through the cities of Saint Brienc, Orleans, Le Mans, Chatillon-sur-Loire, Is-sur-Tille, Nevers and Dijon, and on toward the Vosges Mountains. We were several hours late and instead of reaching our destination at 11:00 A. M. June 27th, as scheduled, we arrived at 2:00 A. M. the morning of the 28th.

The night was extremely dark, damp and chilly when the train came to a stop, and the orders to detrain were shouted hoarsely into the car doors. We were terribly weary from lack of sleep, and piled out onto a sort of gravel platform in a daze. Those that found spirit enough to look about the place were poorly repaid for the effort; all that could be seen was the dusky train, a couple of shacks, and the hazy outline of a steep hill with

an intangible suggestion of a tower near the summit. We were hastily formed in column of squads and, skirting the train, entered a small village whose presence we had failed to observe before. It seemed as though the heavy footsteps of the men and the clattering of horses' hoofs were loud enough to awaken the dead, but the sleeping villagers were apparently undisturbed,—not a single curious head appeared in a window or door. No doubt they were accustomed long ago to the sound of marching men at all hours of the day or night.

As we left the village, which we found later was St. Thiebault, the cloud bank overhead scudded by and the clear light of the moon revealed to us a broad, rolling valley up which our road wound, glistening white. The road hugged the left side, close to the low, rugged hills. After a hike of about three miles we halted at a group of old, wooden, tar-papered barracks for the rest of the night, and early next morning moved on. We had not far to go; about five hundred yards from the barracks a bend of the road revealed another village nestling at the foot of the hills, and we were assigned to billets in the old stone houses. The name of the village was Goncourt, and we were to remain there indefinitely.



June 28th-July 23rd

The village of Goncourt is located on the Meuse River at a point about fifteen kilometres south of the city of Neuf-Chateau, in the foot-hills of the Vosges Mountains. Like all the small towns of about five hundred population in this district of France, it nestles down in a hollow of the land, a cluster of closely built stone houses around a small church. To the tourist or stranger these villages are a continual surprise; one comes upon them suddenly around a bend of the road where he never suspected a town to exist, and, having passed on, finds that they have disappeared just as mysteriously,—swallowed up in the folds of the land or hidden among the heavily wooded ridges.

Goncourt is laid out in the rough form of the letter "T," although to be true, its streets are far from being as straight as that letter would indicate. Its main street, the Grande Rue, is merely a portion of the Neuf-Chateau road running due north. Another road leads out of town to the east across the Meuse toward the village of Sommrecourt, while the road forming the other arm of the "T" curves west toward the city of Chaumont. At the cross of the "T" on a little knoll is the village church, a small stone building surmounted by a high, slender belfry and spire. Practically all the stores are to be found on the Grande Rue; the Epecerie,—sweets and notions; Mercerie,—dry-goods; Boucherie,—butcher shop; Boulangerie,—grocery, and a few wineshops. One has to seek out these stores more by instinct than by sight; they are usually concealed in houses of ordinary appearance, behind closed shutters and indicated only by small, grimy, and often partially obliterated signs.

The houses were all of similar type, built of rough sand-stone, in most cases unchiseled and laid just as it was quarried, the chinks being filled with chips and coarse mortar. This method of construction necessitated great thickness of walls, and most of them measured at least two feet. The roofs were mostly of tile, high-gabled, and laid on frames of heavy rough-hewn rafters.

A few of the poorer houses were roofed with thin slabs of stone overlaid with grasses. Usually one side of the house was devoted to two or three rooms for the family, while, separated by a partition, the other half contained the stables for the cattle and horses. In the loft above was kept a store of hay and straw. The larger and more pretentious houses had walled gardens at the rear, but there were few of these; most houses had no sign of a garden, and often their rear walls butted solidly against the hillside. Every house had its manure pile in the front door yard. Truly, as Mark Twain said, one could judge their wealth by the size and offensiveness of their manure pile!

When we first entered the town we were crowded into two or three lofts filled with musty straw, old chicken wire, pallets or bunks, dust, and old worn out bits of clothing left by former occupants. Later we were assigned to somewhat better, lighter and more cleanly billets in the northern end of the town. To be truthful, it must be said that these billets were clean only after we had cleared and swept them of all rubbish; but though we labored often and even cleaned the streets each day it was impossible to maintain very sanitary conditions. However, in a week's time we grew accustomed to the odor of the stables below us and thought no more of it.

Our kitchen and mess hall, because no other adequate quarters could be obtained, were situated at the opposite end of the town from our billets, and therefore we went to mess in company formation. It seemed very peculiar at first to line up for mess in the village street, but the unusual was rapidly supplanting the former routine of our army life so, like the billets, it became a mere matter of course.

There were many things becoming matters of course, but we had not yet become accustomed to the lack of baths; consequently, over ten days having elapsed since our hose-bath on the Leviathan, we rushed at the earliest opportunity to the Meuse River when we arrived in Goncourt. Perhaps most of us had expected to find a fairly wide and clean stream because the Meuse was marked "river" on the map and we had read so much concerning it in the war news, but all of us were disappointed. It was a mere creek that flowed lazily between low, grassy banks and reedy marshes. The slightest disturbance caused the ooze of the bottom to rile the water. Baths and the washing of clothes were a necessity, however, so we swallowed our disappointment and made the best of the matter.

We had only a couple of days of freedom, and then, on *Monday, July 1st*, we entered upon our first drill schedule in France. *After a week of drill at the trench system a few miles from town,*

consisting mostly of squad drill, calisthenics, target designation, elementary machine gun drill, and lectures by the French captain detailed to our company, we retired to our own special drill grounds on the hillside around our mess hall and settled down in earnest to strictly machine gun work. Many of our men were those transferred to the company just before we left Sheridan, but the interest and speed which they exhibited in mastering the new work enabled us to progress wonderfully. When we went to a nearby machine gun range on the eighteenth of July, we all made splendid records. We crowded the few weeks we were at Goncourt with incessant work, and consequently when we were ordered to move to the front on the twenty-third we were well trained and full of confidence.

The sergeants were billeted in a very cozy loft while we were at Goncourt, but Waldo had the edge on the rest of them. The old lady who lived below took a shine to him and offered him a good old feather bed in one of her spare rooms. That same evening he went out and soaked up quite a bit of Vin Rouge which proved more powerful than he had anticipated; at any rate, the sergeants say that, judging by the clamor and racket that went on when he got back, Waldo must have gotten into the wrong bed.

When we finally did get a Y. M. C. A. at Goncourt, it was usually closed except during drill hours, when nobody could get to it.

Do you remember that grand and glorious feeling when, on July 10th, the Camp Lee mail reached us?

Gosh, what fiends we were for chocolate during that first month in France!

Were you one of the dudes that celebrated the glorious Fourth by going on wood detail three miles into the country when there was "boo-coo" wood within a hundred yards of the mess-hall?

Remember that old maid school teacher who preferred officers to enlisted men? Well,



we know what she got! (We don't mean that nice schoolma'am who taught the *men* French every evening.)

Sing a song of Goncourt,
Coleman wants some meat,—
Comes in late at mess-time,
Goes out again, "Tout-suite!"

Lieutenant Fri was bashful,—he always struck a September Morn pose whenever he was in swimming and a skirt appeared on the horizon.

We were issued wrap-leggings and overseas caps shortly after our arrival in Goncourt, and then, as is characteristic of the army, were forbidden to wear them.

When they finally did conclude to let us wear them what a motley appearance we made! Those spirals simply couldn't be molded to the leg, and each lap hung out like the ruffles on an old fashioned pair of "Panties."

Old "Sir Bunnyface" Carlin was a great student of French. One day he caught a little French boy up in his billet and suspected him of stealing some chocolate that he had missed. He chased the lad out and then seeing the mother in the street below, tried to tell her to keep him out in the future. She couldn't understand and Carlin lost his temper.

"Dammit!" he shouted. "Garcon Venir—up—here—and—er—apporter chocolat!"

Johnson seeks adventure,
Spencer wants some, too,
So they go to Bourmont
There to "Parle-vous."
Get to feeling classy,
Come back on the train,
Train speeds right through Goncourt,
They can't get off again!
When the train stops running,
They're in Neuf-Chateau.
M. P. says, "Get out of here!"
Where can soldats go?
Sleeping in the bushes,

Dew is cold and wet,
Hiking back on Sunday,
Guess they won't forget!

When you seek adventure,
In this land of France,
If you take a railroad train,
You also take a chance!

—VAN.

On Friday, July 12th, Captain Wedow, Sergeant Stimmel and Sergeant Chapman left the company for a month of Machine-gun School.

Dirty work! Vic and Perk went back on us and helped prepare the gashouse for the torture of their comrades. However, guess we ought to thank them, for it taught us that gas masks were made to be used. We sure hung on to our "Return Tickets to Hoboken" thereafter!

Zellner was hungry, very hungry, the day we arrived in Goncourt. "My stomach thought my throat was cut," he says. "I snooped around town until I spotted a family eating dinner. I went in and after much rag-chewing and sign language, succeeded in making them "compree" that I wanted something to eat. Then I sat down to wait until they had finished, and noticed that they made a good deal of noise while eating the soup. Far be it from me to offend these sensitive people, thought I, so when they brought mine I made noise enough to be heard across the street, much to their delight."

Evidently "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" is the motto of the diplomatic Private Zellner.

"I'll do most anything for money," says the sober and industrious Sir Henry Oliver Slopjar Sparks, "but I had to quit dog-robbin'—wages was too uncertain."

We don't kick much at having the non-coms go in to mess at the head of the line, but darned if we can see this stuff of their butting into the dish-washing line. It was started at Goncourt, but stopped "toot-sweet!"

We never put off until tomorrow the things we shouldn't do today. Result—Extra Duty!

Absolute knowledge I have none
But my aunt's wash-woman's sister's son
Heard a policeman on his beat
Say to a laborer on the street
That he had a letter just last week
Written in the finest Greek
From a Chinese coolie in Timbuctu
Who said that the negroes in Cuba knew
Of a colored man in a Texas town
Who got it straight from a circus clown
That a man in the Klondike heard the news
From a gang of South American Jews
About somebody in Borneo
Who knew a man who claims to know
Of a swell society female fake
Whose mother-in-law will undertake
To prove that her seventh husband's sister's niece
Had stated in a printed piece
That she had a son who had a friend
Who knows when the war is going to end!
—Apologies to Someone.

According to Hamer Farrell the only women who aren't dangerous to a soldier's peace of mind are over seventy and under seven.

Advice to M. P.'s. If you are tempted to cuss the army, remember that the doughboys in the trenches do their hardest work at 4:30 in the morning, and they don't stop when their eight hours are up or get a chance to loaf around a wine-shop. They haven't even a YMCA to get to and often not a cigarette to smoke.

Goncourt to Bru

July 23rd, 1918

Being the last company to leave Goncourt we were naturally "saddled" with the work of the final clean-up of the town. Early in the morning, having brought our packs to the mess-hall, we were detailed by squads to police all the streets and billets which had been occupied by the regiment. This occupied our time until almost noon, our work also having included the salvaging of all equipment that had been left behind.

Leaving the village at about one o'clock in a fine drizzling rain, we marched without halt to Saint Thiebolt, the town at which we had detrained less than a month ago. Nearby, on a very high and steep hill, is the town of Bourmont. Having loaded and then taken on our travel rations, we were soon on our way. The train made excellent speed and before night we had passed through Neuf-Chateau, Toul and Nancy, and were headed southeast in the general direction of Luneville, which town, however, we did not enter, having taken a branch road that bore us further to the south. At about midnight we detrained at a railhead near the village of Moyer.

Great care and strict precautions were taken against the showing of lights; a fact that in the light of later experiences seems amusing, but which was really quite necessary to our safety, as the railhead had recently been a target for numerous air-raids. We were now higher up in the mountains, and the wet night air penetrated to our very bones as we waited throughout the dark hours until morning. No one seemed to know why we did not move from the railhead, although it was whispered that we were awaiting trucks. Conversation and conjecture as to our final destination ran rife among us, some insisting that we were going directly to the front lines; others "pooh-poohing" the notion and stating their belief that we were to be billeted in some town near, but not on, the front. The latter faction, which had considered the problem coolly, were correct,—at seven that morning we were loaded in trucks and after a two-hour ride, which ended at the small town of Bru, two and a half kilometers from Rambervillers, we entered billets.



July 23rd-August 2nd

Bru, a village not quite as large as Goncourt, lies in a valley flanked by the green Vosges Mountains. In appearance it is much the same as Goncourt, having the same type of houses and stores and being built along the main road. In the center of the town, branching at right angles to the north of the "main drag" to Rambervillers, is another road along which part of the village is strung. There is a tiny stone bridge at this junction of the two roads under which flows a clear, narrow, mountain brook, and here was our favorite lounging spot. The village church and most of our billets were on this street, as almost every house along the conspicuous main road had been destroyed by air-raids or dynamited during the occupation by the Germans in the first flush of their success at the beginning of the war. Bru was the point at which the invading tide had been turned back in the Lorraine Sector. The Huns never reached Rambervillers, one of their important objectives because of its railroads. Our kitchen was set up in one of the ruined dwellings.

Our work at Bru was very light, as we were now in actual fighting zone reserve, and subject to air observation and attacks. Our sojourn here was really a rest from the intensive training at Goncourt prior to our entrance into the front line.

A Ghost Story

Any man who was unfortunate enough to have been on street guard while we were at Bru will undoubtedly appreciate this story, especially if his post led by the old church. In fact, almost every man has a clear vision of that old church and the graveyard surrounding it; the strange beadwork wreaths, old headstones, and the graves of fallen French soldiers in the corner of the walls at the rear, marked only by wooden crosses and medallions of red, white and blue bearing their names.

It was Private Stewart's trick at guard. He and his partner on guard had heard a great deal about the strange squeaking

noise which was said to issue from the church belfry at night, and they determined to investigate it. The guards they relieved told them with rather ashamed countenances, but with evident sincerity, that they had heard this strange creaking and that, though loath to believe in ghosts, it had surely caused a "creepy feeling."

Midnight came, and "Stew" and his fellow guard met at the little stone bridge. The night was intensely still and the moon shone from a clear sky, bathing the town in pale light.

"I've heard it, Stew," said the other. "Listen!"

They were quite some distance from the church, but faintly through the still night air came a curious sound not unlike the buzzing of a locust or the creaking of a shutter swinging on its hinges. They listened intently, but suddenly it ceased, possibly drowned by a slight breeze that sprung up. Both took a hitch at their belts.

"Well,—let's go!"

As they neared the church the noise began again, gaining in volume as they approached. They halted in the shadow of a house and gazed up at the belfry. The noise continued, but seemed subdued, like the twittering of a bird. It came at regular intervals, as the swinging of a pendulum. A door of the church stood slightly ajar. The situation was "creepy" indeed!

"Oh, Hell," said Stew, "let's go up and find out what it is."

They slipped quietly across the street and up the wide stone steps. Within, they were in semi-darkness, but succeeded in finding the door to the belfry stairs. Up they went,—on tiptoes, and with hands on their pistols. The creaking became plainer, and finally, with bated breath they entered the room that contained the mechanism of the big church clock. There was nothing to shoot at. The strange noise proved to be only the creaking of the weights as they descended at regular intervals.

Now that the mystery was solved their two minds held but a single thought: "Let's have some fun out of this."

Next day they took Vic Norris and Coleman into their confidence, and spread the tale of the strange noise through the company, not mentioning the fact, of course, that they had investigated it. That night they corralled a few unsuspecting, but nervy comrades, for the purpose of discovering the ghosts, among them Lee Kurfis and George Bartow. Stewart and Coleman disappeared quietly and hid themselves in the belfry above the clock. Led by Vic and Johnson the innocents entered the church and mounted the stairs. With the shaded light of matches they pussy-

footed upward. The creaking noise grew more plain, and just at the entrance of the clock-room the two conspirators that were leading them halted.

"Listen!" they whispered.

Another sound reached their trembling ears—a low, subdued, ghostly moaning and groaning issued from the dark heights of the belfry.

"My gosh, let's get out of here," cried Bartow, and turning on the stairs the whole bunch stampeded. Johnson and Norris remained behind to congratulate Stew and Coleman upon their excellent impersonation of ghosts. Kurfis, however, had not been fooled. They found him waiting at the entrance of the church,—the rest had taken to their heels,—and but for him they would have been locked in the church by the old priest, who had been aroused by the unseemly racket and was closing and locking the doors!

Our First Air-Raid

Monday—July 29th, 1918

Few of us will ever forget that first air-raid at Bru. Although we found out later that it was over the city of Rambervillers, two and a half kilometers away, we shall always consider it "our" air-raid, for we were sure that night that it was intended for us.

Most of us had been in our bunks for an hour or two and were fast asleep. At about 10:00 P. M. we were awakened by a series of sharp explosions, the whir of motors, and the popping of machine guns. A few seconds later the guards came rushing through the billets with the cry, "Everybody out." We hurriedly donned our clothes,—many were already dressing,—and tumbled into the streets. Lieutenant Shultz ordered everyone to take cover and keep off the streets, and we scattered like chaff before the wind. Some of us did not stop until we were out in the open fields beyond the limits of the village.

Meanwhile a terrific commotion was going on somewhere *above us*. We could see nothing *although we gazed intently at the*



star-splashed heavens and scanned them from horizon to horizon. Half a dozen more "socks" were dropped, the explosions shaking the ground beneath our feet. A lively air battle was in full swing,—we could tell by the buzzing of the motors and staccato bursts of machine gun fire that the planes were darting, swooping, diving and charging one another. Signal-balloons glowed reddish-yellow along the northern horizon towards the front lines. Then, just as suddenly as it began, the raid came to an end. The enemy fled for his own lines, closely pursued by our planes. The whirring of motors grew fainter and fainter, then indistinct, and finally beyond earshot.

The following night the raiders came again and a hot battle ensued directly over the town. One enemy plane swooped down to within a hundred yards of the main road and swept it with machine gun fire. Most of us, however, remained in bed, content to let them go to it, and refusing to be stirred up again as we were the night before.

Scott jumped about a foot in the air at the crash of the first bomb, scrambled into half his clothes, grabbed his range-finder, and tore out into the street. He ripped and roared, ordered the guns mounted, and raved about connecting files and the ammunition dump. Then he set up his range-finder and tried to get the range on the enemy. Might as well have tried the North Star! After that we called him Range-finder Scott.

One old French dame started running around with a lighted lantern,—guess she was going to help Scott get the range!

Meanwhile a few birds with an eye for opportunity got away with half the contents of her wine-cellar.

Bugler Speary had to crawl under the little stone bridge on his hands and knees through the water to get away from the fire of the plane which was shooting up the burg the second night.

Most of the civilians remained in their houses during both raids. No doubt they thought we were a bunch of maniacs, and you can hardly blame them,—especially when you consider "getting the range."

"Educated" Ben Shiffman, Seaman, "Bunny" Donahue and Matt Manning spent most of their time at that little brick bakery.

We couldn't "see" her sister, but SHE was certainly a very petite and jolie mademoiselle.

Remember that old Frog who was Zig-Zag one night and amused us for over an hour turning somersaults, dancing the wiggles, and eating live cigarette butts?

Dick Evans was very bashful. He wouldn't kiss little Marguerite even when she asked him. - But Scotty wasn't a bit backward about it.

Sunday, the 28th, all gun squad corporals and gunners left for the Front.

Bru to the Front

August 2nd-August 3rd

We left Bru the evening of Friday, August 2nd, at 7:30 P. M., to enter the front lines for the first time. The dusk of evening settled into impenetrable darkness as we came to the end of the first hour of hiking and halted at the village of Saint Benoit to rest. At Saint Benoit we turned northward into the rough, wild southern ranges of the Vosges Mountains. The roads were very narrow and winding, flanked by the tall pine, cedar, oak and poplar, and bordered by treacherous ditches. It was impossible to see ten feet ahead; even the ranks of the men before us were scarcely visible, and consequently the march was very trying to the nerves as we had to virtually feel our way through the inky blackness and were in constant danger of walking off into the ditches.

After four hours of steady hiking we emerged into mountainous but comparatively clear country. Here the road hugged closely to the side of the ridge. Below was a broad valley. The night was so murky and so heavy with dew that, until our eyes had grown accustomed to the change of light after emerging from the forest, we thought the level, grayish-white mist that shrouded the valley was the smooth surface of a lake. This is an optical illusion very common in all mountainous portions of France.

We had covered over twenty kilometers of the rugged roads *and were "dog-tired."* Only a soldier who has trudged these *weary distances under full pack and complete equipment can appreciate the meaning of that expression; the sawing, cramping,*

and rheumatic pains that come in the shoulders from the binding slings of heavy blanket-rolls; the sharp burning of the skin where the pistol belt rubs the hip-bones; the feeling of collapse that comes in the thighs; the sandy, blistered sensation and aching arches in the feet. All these things tend to sap the entire strength of the body, but somehow we have had the will to "stick" drilled into us. Our former Captain, now Major Chambers, succeeded in instilling a "never-say-die" spirit into the company that we have carried through the war. We make this statement without the slightest intent to belittle our comrades in the line companies of the regiment, that in the Machine Gun Company a man would feel intensely ashamed to give in and fall out of ranks on a march. A very few have done this during our travels and then only because they were really ill, or completely exhausted. In looking back over the past we realize that our capacity of endurance has often reacted against us, and that we have been pressed harder in many marches than we might otherwise have been, but we always pulled through in good shape, and now we are proud of our record.

After we emerged from the black forest we hiked only two kilometers further, and at 11:30 halted at a small cluster of five or six houses and were billeted in the hay lofts. Our kitchen had hot coffee ready for us in a short time, but most of us were so weary that we passed it up, and flopping down in the hay, drew our overcoats over us and fell asleep.

As it was necessary, because of the possibility of observation by enemy planes, to make all movements after dark, we enjoyed a long sleep and rest the following day. Many of us wandered about the woods and valleys in the vicinity, which we found very interesting. There were old trenches and barbed-wire defences built across the low lands of the valley and extending up and over the wooded hills. We found many old dugouts of marvelous depth, and investigated their dark, wet recesses until our curiosity was satisfied and our ardor for exploration had flagged.

At seven-thirty that evening we again took the road, which now became more winding as it followed the side of the valley. We passed through the towns of La Chapelle and Betrichamps and then entered the wild hills again, traveling in a general north-easterly direction. Pitch darkness settled once more over the land and there was an indication of coming rain in the air and sky. Two men were detailed as aeroplane guards and marched a couple of hundred yards ahead of the main body where the tramp of feet would not interrupt hearing. We halted several times at the sound of buzzing motors overhead and took up the *march again* when it ceased, sticking at all times to the darkest

portion of the road, a precaution really unnecessary because of the blackness of the night.

Just beyond Betrichamps we passed a column of troops our division was relieving,—men of the 77th Division. They greeted us with many shouts and sallies, among which one was often repeated,—“Give ‘em hell, boys,—we did.” We didn’t argue then about the brand of hell they claimed to have given “Jerry,” for we felt that as they were apparently troops who had seen service we had no right to judge them.

As we penetrated further into the mountains the road became correspondingly more difficult and our progress was slow. At Indian Village, the supply base for the sector, we halted to drop the ration cart from the column. Indian Village is a portion of a dense woods throughout which are scattered numerous small shacks, stables and warehouses, safe from air observation to any great extent. It was midnight when we stopped there, and of course we could see nothing more of the place than a break in the line of trees that gave entrance to it. After leaving Indian Village we went down a steep narrow defile into the town of Neuf Maisons,—which lay in a deep sheltered valley,—through its silent echoing streets, and up another steep hill to the plateau beyond. We were now about five kilometers from the front and on high, clear ground,—an extremely exposed position. The weather, however, was in our favor, the sky being overcast with a thick blanket of black storm clouds and rain beginning to fall.

After slightly more than an hour of steady hiking we came to a gradual descent and entered a small village which we learned later was Pexonne. Here the storm broke in all its fury. We were forced to halt, as it was absolutely impossible to see the way ahead. The night had been dark, but now came blackness indescribable. The shadowy buildings faded from sight; it was as though we had plunged into an inky void. For over half an hour the rain fell in torrents and we were soaked to the skin. Although we cannot vouch for the truth of it, the statement was made later that this forced delay saved us a great deal of danger and trouble, as the enemy shelled the road near the front about half an hour before we came through, having had information of our coming. When the storm had spent itself and the darkness had lifted sufficiently for us to proceed, we went on through the town, stopping again at the building used for headquarters of the battalion to pick up more ammunition and the men from the other division who were to guide us to our positions. As we left the town we adjusted our gas masks to the alert position.

We were now nearing the front and on a winding but level road, camouflaged on the sides by screents of wire-netting which

supported a mass of pine twigs, thus preventing observation of traffic from all points except directly overhead. There were also screens strung across the road at intervals of about twenty or thirty yards, which hung high enough to permit the passage of wagons and prevented angular observations by enemy balloons. Of course such camouflage is readily apparent to the enemy, but its purpose is to conceal, rather than to deceive the eye. The clouds had partially cleared, and through the occasional breaks in the road-screen we could see that we were on a rolling plateau which resolved itself into a series of ridges directly ahead of us. The dull booming of guns which had been previously drowned by the storm, now became more distinct, and occasional flashes of lurid red or the glare of distant star-shells could be seen. As we advanced these warlike manifestations increased, and finally we reached a point where the glare of the flares lit up the scene with the intensity of lightning.

Suddenly we struck a sharp curving descent of the road, and a moment later we were on the paved streets of a town. It was Badonviller, the deserted city that lay on the edge of No Man's Land. Here we were at the most dangerous point of our march, as the Germans shelled the place regularly each night to hamper any possible troop movements or the passage of ration and ammunition trains. Our machine-gun carts rattled loudly over the cobbles, and the sound of hoofs and the tramp of feet kept our hearts in our mouths. One mule burst into a shrill "Hee-Haw," and that started them all. We thought sure that it was our death warrant, but Jerry must have been drowsing for we were unmolested. Shortly after entering the town we turned sharply to the right down a street lined with ruined dwellings and public buildings. Broken shutters banged in the wind, which whined dismally through empty rooms and deserted galleries of tottering structures. The gurgling of water from the fountain-head of a stone watering trough seemed a strange sound in what might be termed a dead city. Again we turned to the right and shortly left the town, halting along a narrow road behind a densely wooded ridge.

We unloaded the guns, tripods, and ammunition boxes, and each platoon was guided to positions and dugouts over the crest of the hill. Our officers established themselves in their quarters,—a small stone building,—and the relief was complete. We were now in the front line of the Baccarat Sector, and awaited the coming of the morning, still four hours away, to completely organize and make a reconnaissance of the situation. Our mules were taken back to Indian Village but the carts were put in shelters in the woods built for that purpose.



On the Front

August 4th-August 9th

Our first bit of front line service lasted only five days, but was filled to the brim with a new brand of excitement and adventure.

The first day, Sunday, August 4th, was spent in getting settled; setting up the kitchen, picking and organizing the gun positions and guard details, preparing a system of liaison, or communications between gun positions and platoon headquarters, platoon and company headquarters, and company and battalion headquarters. This done, we settled into the routine of front line troops; observing "Jerry's" movements, strengthening our positions, standing guard against surprise by night raids or gas attacks, caring for our guns and equipment, and sending out reconnoitering parties at night to the Infantry Outposts in No Man's Land. The main purpose of our presence here was to begin that "seasoning" which is necessary to the production of fighting troops, and we entered into the work with a will and a marvelous eagerness to learn.



Our positions lay on a long, high ridge that was densely wooded and admirably adapted to concealment. The ridge overlooked a broad rolling valley or series of minor folds in the land in which were our infantry outposts and No Man's Land. On

the opposite side was another wooded ridge, lower than ours, on which were the German lines. Directly in front of our line the land was clear, affording an unbroken view of the valley and the far-off series of ridges behind the enemy's lines. Down the valley to the left the land was also free of forests. Here lay the deserted and ruined towns of Badonviller and Neuviller, the former just within our lines and the latter in the very middle of No Man's Land. The terrain up the valley on our right was very wild and unbroken, and covered with dense forests and undergrowths.

Where this wooded portion began there was a spur of forest which was merely a maze of dead, stark, gray-colored trunks of trees, splintered and torn by months of shellfire, stripped naked of foliage, and killed by poisonous gas. An unused road followed the base of the ridge to an abandoned house and mill, ruined, and occupied only by rats and bats.

Each gun position was provided with dugouts for the men, most of them situated just behind the crest, but two in particular, those of the first platoon, located half-way down the face of the hill, and well camouflaged in the brush. Those dugouts behind the crest were fairly dry and comfortable, but, due to the seepage of water, those on the hillside were scarcely habitable. However, the men had to make the best of the matter, and improved them as much as possible. As is usual, the bunks for sleeping were built in tiers, and constructed of boards and wire netting or woven steel wire. To make them more comfortable they were filled with straw which was damp, dirty and in a musty condition when we arrived. We found that a bed of pine twigs made a much better and sweeter smelling bed. Furthermore, and most important of all, the odor of the pine seemed to drive away those pests, the cooties and straw fleas, although to be true it did not eliminate them entirely.

The company was in charge of Lieutenant Merriman in the absence of the Captain. We also had with us Lieutenants Tilden, Fri and Smith, the first two in charge of the gun platoons and the latter in charge of the train, which was at Indian Village. Company headquarters was established in a small, stone building near the base of the ridge. It was very small, and judging from its facings of glazed tile, had been at one time a wayside chapel. A few days after our arrival Lieutenant Merriman moved his headquarters to the village of Pexonne, where battalion headquarters were situated. We suspect that he was forced to do so because of orders from "higher up," as "Merry"

always liked to be right among the men. Lieutenants Tilden and Fri, however, continued to occupy those quarters.

The kitchen and Headquarter's Platoon Runners' shacks were about fifty yards up the road on the edge of the woods, where the smoke from the fire would disperse itself among the trees. Food was carried to the men in tin buckets by details from each squad.



This weird, dead town—the Deserted City, we named it—lay only a short distance from our positions. In size it was not large, having formerly held probably two thousand five hundred inhabitants, but it was nevertheless a lasting monument to the destructiveness and wanton spirit of the Huns. It was the first scene of wholesale devastation we had seen,—an earthquake could not have wrought more complete ruin! Not a single building, not a single home had escaped; those that were not stricken by shellfire or aerial bombs had been deliberately dynamited. The interior of the great cathedral had been thoroughly mutilated and the great roof had tumbled into it. Only the high, round, stone tower and the walls remained standing, and even the tower was in constant danger of crashing to earth, as a big shell had carried away a portion of the base.

It was evident that the people had evacuated the town in a frenzy of haste, snatching only a few necessary articles of food and wearing apparel and small valuables, for every house contained nearly complete furnishings, things of great value, such as mahogany tables, chairs, bedsteads, huge mirrors, brass chandeliers, clothing of every description, books, stoves, tapestries,—in fact, every conceivable household article could be found. A great deal of these things had been hacked, or broken, or carried off, or marred by exposure to the weather. In spite of the fact that the town was being shelled intermittently by the Germans, French civilians came there often with wheelbarrows or little carts and took away furniture and clothing in small quantities. It was there for anyone to take who cared to make the effort, and naught but rats and stray cats to protest. The stores, of course, had been long since stripped of any articles of food, but in the several druggists' and chemists' shops there were shelves and drawers full of medicines, drugs and chemicals of every description.

Even on the brightest and most sunny days the town was "spooky," and at night the stoutest heart would flutter apprehensively at the banging of shutters in the breeze, the flapping

of curtains, the scurry of rats, or the slinking forms of lean and hungry cats skulking in and out among the ruins. It was a common belief that German snipers visited the place nocturnally, and several infantry runners going through with messages asserted that they had been shot at. However, this is a matter for debate,—it was easily possible, but not probable.

Front-Line—"Fromage"

Rookie Raines was on guard one night at Gun A-1. It was pouring rain and Rookie was very much disgusted. Going back to a bench about five yards to the rear of his gun he saw two men sitting there and unsuspectingly remarked, "I wish to God Tilden had to sit out here for three hours!" The pair on the bench proved to be Lieutenant Tilden and the platoon sergeant. Rookie double-timed back to his gun!

According to Corporal Harmon this is what little Bill Eddy wrote to his girl to give her a small idea of the little aggravations a soldier has to endure on the front:

"Dearest Girlie:

"I will now try to write a few lines to you if them German guns will keep their shells off this dugout, but they have been lighting around here all around me and I will tell you they get my goat, but not as much as yesterday, when I was out on No Man's Land gathering flowers to send to you. I am sorry to tell you that after all my trouble and danger some other guy stole them so I will not be able to send them now. Our homes they are dugouts, which are holes so deep that the rats in them have never seen daylight. I'd hate to be found dead in one of them, but a man has to get used to great danger when he is a soldier. And while I'm speaking of rats they are very good friends to us in a way and in a way they ain't, because they keep us awake at night so the Jerries can't get us. I don't want the Jerries to get me, for I have seen some of them and they look mean, but, take it in the other hand, sweetheart, I would like to get some sleep. Last night I went to bed with my shoes on as you see we are not allowed to sleep on the front line without them on, but them rats don't know the army rules and I suppose they thought I had been tanked up on this French wine and forgot to take them off, so they all got busy to remove my shoes for me, but they made a bad mistake and began to chew into my toes. Maybe they thought it was a slab of this here French cheese they was after. But I woke up in time to save the rest of the squad from sore *feet and no hob-nail shoes*. Now I must stop, sweetness, as I

have to figure out how to stop those rats from eating any more shoes, as the supply sergeant won't give me any more. I guess I will wash my feet. I will write again when I have some more experiences and I got a hunch they will be many and hair-raising, as this is an exciting and dangerous life.

"Your soldier,

"BILL."

Private Floyd Chandler slips us this one:

On the night of August 4th it fell on the Third Platoon mule leaders to take the ammunition up to the front. We were "green," of course, at that stage of the game, and having heard so much we were naturally leery of the Germans. After a long hike we arrived at about midnight, and Lieutenant Roger A. Smith, who was in charge, decided to take a short cut back to Indian Village. It was as dark as pitch in those woods and you couldn't see the cart in front of you. We lost our bearings and were feeling our way along a narrow road when somebody shouted a command we couldn't understand and several dusky forms leaped up and stuck bayonets in Lieutenant Smith's face. We all thought we had wandered over into German territory and, though we had no pistols, made up our minds to fight our way out or die. However' we didn't have to do either one of those things, for they turned out to be French artillery guards. They had gas masks on, but we couldn't understand their jabbering, so Lieutenant Smith ordered us to put ours on, too, saying that he supposed they could smell gas better than he could. They made him go down in a dugout and asked him all sorts of questions, none of which he could understand; so they gave it up as a bad job and let us go on our way. Lieutenant Smith decided to wait until daybreak to find the way back, and it was about 6:30 next morning when we reached Indian Village, a tired and sleepy bunch.

Corporal Shutt and his dog-robber, Bill Eddy, needed some furniture for their dugout, says Pete Clemons. They fared forth into Badonviller in search of it, and while they were browsing through the houses they met a couple of mademoiselles who were salvaging some vegetables in an abandoned garden. The boys fooled around quite a while trying to converse with them, but it was no go. Now Paul Shutt had sworn he would never touch a drop of wine or liquor in France, and so, when the girls offered him and Bill some wine out of the jug they had with them he refused, but Bill decided it was too good a chance to pass up and guzzled some down. Shutt says they insisted that he take some.

"so to satisfy them I put the jug to my lips, but didn't drink a drop." It's all right to say so, but durned if we can see how even the tee-totalin' Corporal Shutt could keep from licking his lips!

It was raining and extremely dark the night of August 8th. The second platoon, under Lieutenant Fri, had very shaky positions. It would mean disaster to show the faintest gleam of light, so at night they had a hard time. At about 10:00 P. M. the Lieutenant wandered down to one of the gun positions. The password for the night was "Nice." He got within challenging distance and the sturdy guard bawled out "Halt!" in such a wicked tone that he nearly collapsed. To the guard's surprise he started spilling out the password before it was asked, and garbled it, *comme ca*, "Nice! Nice! Niece! Niece!—er, Nice! Nice!"

Speaking for the gang, Clinton Felkey says that what they would like would be the pleasure of meeting that nice niece of Lieutenant Fri's.

Del Artis says there is just one real selfish man in the rough-neck mule-leading gang and that man is Private Kanyuh. "He wouldn't steal candy from a baby or rob the dead," says Del, "but he has been known to take another man's gas mask off his face during a gas attack. We were often disturbed in the night at Indian Village by gas alarms. One night we were aroused by the piercing sound of the sirens and, as usual, Kanyuh didn't know where his gas mask was. He became frantic and raved and howled, mumbled and babbled, sighed and moaned, "Where is my mask? Where is my mask? My God, boys, where is it? Oh, oh, what'll I do! What'll I do!" No one had time to tell him,—we were getting ours on "tout-suite." All of a sudden he let out a whoop of despair and jumped on poor little Bates and tore his mask off. Bates, however, beat him off and got his mask back on. When it was all over and had turned out to be a false alarm, Kanyuh was sore because we laughed at him!"

Do you remember that we entered the front lines without even a pistol to protect ourselves with? Wonder if they expected us to throw the ammunition in our belts at the Huns? We finally got good old Springfield rifles. Weren't they welcome, though?

On the night of August 7th, while everything was peaceful and quiet on the Badonviller front, a shot snapped the stillness

near Gun Position No. 5. The dugout gas guard awakened the gun crew, who hurried to the scene of action armed with bolos, old bayonets and rifles. The gun guards, Clinton Felkey and "Stand to" Roush, told Corporal Cater that they had fired at something moving among the wire entanglements out in front of the gun position. A patrol was formed at once, consisting of Bill Eddy, Dick Dawson, Del Artis, Bill Blakeman and Vic Earl, in charge of Harry Cater. They formed in skirmish line and crawled out among the wire tangles and brush, but could discover no traces of the intruder. By that time Lieutenant Fri was on the job, and all of the men remained on guard until morning, half froze by the chill night air. Daylight showed only a break in the camouflage of the old gun position.

—ETHAN R. FRY.

Do you remember that it was plum season when we were at the front and the "boo-coo" plum trees in Badonviller?

Runner Stewart of Headquarters Platoon was the carrier of the first message from the front to Pexonne. He had to go through Badonviller, both going and coming, without even a bolo to protect himself with. Felt kinda shaky, didn't you, Stew?

One day Private Seaman was sent by command,
To pick blackberries in No Man's Land.
That he hated this order we wouldn't doubt,
But nevertheless he carried it out.
But when he returned,—Ah, me! Ah, my!
We heard Lieutenant Tilden sigh,
"How comes it, Seaman, that the berries are crushed? ,
Full of leaves and also dust?"
Then Seaman beat a safe retreat
And answered back, "Revenge is sweet!"

—CARL MUNSON.

Hike from the Front to Clairupt

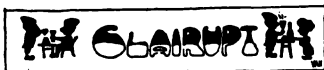
August 10th

Our first hitch in the front line was over at midnight Friday, August 9th. We were relieved by Company "A" of the 135th Machine Gun Battalion, and at 1:30 A. M. formed on the dark road behind the ridge. The enemy had been dropping shells into Badonwiller at varied intervals throughout the evening, and our officers decided that it would be best to take the road through the forest, as the Germans might have gained information of the relief and be "laying" for us. This cost us considerably more time and effort, as the forest depths we penetrated were dark with a dense blackness that defies description. Our route circled back into the village of Pexonne and thence over the plateau to Neufmaisons and Indian Village. Had it not been for a lack of knowledge of the roads we might have reached Indian Village two hours sooner and saved over six kilometers of marching. It was unnecessary to enter Pexonne; we should have gone directly through the woods to Neufmaisons. To make matters worse, Lieutenant Merriman, being a long-legged man, led us a furious pace.

We reached Indian Village at 4:30 A. M. and were met by Lieutenant Fri, who led us over a muddy trail among the shacks to an old animal shelter, where we thankfully flopped down to snatch a little sleep. It seemed that we followed him fully a mile and next day we were surprised to find ourselves within a hundred yards of the entrance to the camp.

Most of us slept late in spite of our bad-smelling, uncomfortable billet. After a good cooked meal at noon the company went through the delouser. All our clothing and blankets were put into large tanks under high pressure live steam. Meanwhile we enjoyed the luxury of a hot shower bath, our first hot bath since we left Camp Lee. The showers were mere single, thin streams of water, but soldiers cannot be choosers! In the afternoon we turned in our rifles and the belated issue of "forty-fives" was made,—at that there were not enough to fully equip the company.

When dusk came we again took the road, and after an easy two-hour hike reached our rest billets at the village of Clairupt, near Bertrichamps. Here we had a plentiful meal with "*beaucoup*" hot coffee, and then went to bed.



August 10th-August 19th

Clairupt is a very small village that may be termed a suburb of the larger town of Bertrichamps, only a few hundred yards distant. It is a mere string of houses built along a single winding street that branches at right angles from the Bertrichamps-Raon-le-Etape road. The buildings are of the usual white-washed stone, red-tile roofed type, and of course our billets were in the lofts. Raon-le-Etape, a large town having many stores and wineshops, is only two kilometers up the main road to the south. Stores and wineshops are the only necessary requisites for a dough-boy's paradise when he has just come from the front. No Q. M. C. or M. P. could appreciate his large cities more.

Our kitchen was set up beneath a large canvas stretched under the wide-spreading branches of an oak that stood at the roadside near the entrance to the village. Company Headquarters and the officers' billets were in the house at the corner of the main road. The mules and carts were quartered in the woods at the far end of town.

The country surrounding Clairupt is unusually beautiful and picturesque. The village nestles close to the rolling foot-hills of a fairly high ridge, which is heavily wooded with pine and evergreen. Between it and the opposite ridge, three miles distant, is a broad verdant valley, well watered by the little Meurthe River. The streams termed rivers in France would be called creeks in America. Almost the entire valley is devoted to lush, damp pastures, which are criss-crossed by little ditches of clear running water. The Raon road, a broad, crushed stone highway, bordered by tall poplars, huge oaks and elms, curves along the eastern side of the valley like a white ribbon through the green. Far off, near the crest of the opposite ridge, is an old fashioned white stone chateau, perched like an ancient castle on the steep mountain side, half-hidden by the tall trees. Further down the valley, barely visible among the western foot-hills, can be seen the tall church spire and bright tile roofs of another town.

We spent the time we were at Clairupt on "reserve" at light drilling,—calisthenics, elementary machine gun drill, signal work,

and range work with pistols and guns. The First Platoon, under Lieutenant Tilden, were on detached service at St. Barbe, a small town about seven kilometers from the city of Baccarat. They were detailed to do guard and police duty at the 37th Division school established there.

Clairrupt Notes and Tales

On Tuesday, August 13th, we went to the machine gun range where we had both machine gun and pistol practice. Captain Wedow, Sergeant Stimmel, and Sergeant Chapman returned to the company that day. We'll never forget how funny Chappie looked in campaign hat and canvas leggings.

At last!—We were issued one sack of "Bull" apiece at supper, the night we reached Clairrupt.

During the lecture and demonstration of the use of hand grenades, Captain Wedow told us a little story of a raid that the Amexes pulled on the Boche in a certain sector. The British and French had been holding the line at this point for many months, during which time they had, of course, attempted raids on the enemy. These raids never bore fruit as the Germans knew their foe's methods so well that they were always able to frustrate them. When the Americans relieved the French they made a raid the first night they were there. However, instead of going over armed to the teeth with pistols, grenades and trench knives, they carried only flashlights and clubs wrapped at the business-end with barbed wire! The enemy was so surprised by such tactics that the raid was a great success.

On Thursday, the 15th, we spent the afternoon in the pastures along the Meurthe River, practicing with live offensive and defensive hand grenades. We had a great time—lots of noise!

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! On Friday, August 16th, the penniless Machine Gun Company drew their first pay in France. Boocoo-Koo-Koos that night coming in at all hours from Raon-le-Etape!

Lieutenant Smith, Sergeant Richner, the meat-hound, and Corporal Vic Norris left for school at Chatillon-sur-Seine on *Saturday, August 17th.*

Ben Shiffman, who can "compree" and "parley" like an interpreter, got into the back room of a wineshop by mistake and surprised a fair mademoiselle. She exclaimed in French:

"Oh, M'sieu! You won't hurt me, will you?"

Ben studied for a moment.

"No,—not much."

Remember the infernal straw fleas in those old billets? Most of us carry the marks of their bites to this day.

One night Vujich woke the Headquarters Platoon billet with a series of wild howls. We thought he had the delirium tremens, but it turned out that a wasp had dropped from the nest above him and tried to crawl into bed with him.

"Wassup kick me in the neck!" explained Vujich.

St. Barbe, France, August 18th, 1918.

On this day and date Privates Benjamin Wilson and Carl Karasek did willfully, wantonly and maliciously appropriate several cans of jam while they were supposed to be guarding the kitchen. Extra duty!

Elva Miller says: "We are all familiar with Reveille, but only the mule-leaders and Two Gun Slim Sylvia know what "Revovo" means. At Clairupt we were too far from the rest of the company to hear the bugle and it fell to the lot of Slim to wake the mule-leaders for stable call. Slim always had plenty of ammunition and he used it freely. He shot the tops out of all our tents blowing that Revolve Gun, as he called it. If the Skipper heard shots and wondered where they came from maybe this will enlighten him.

Private John Kanyuh comes across with this one:

"This happened on August 16th, when we were at Clairupt. All of us mule-leaders were in our little tents, playing cards. Mechanic Dainus came around and told us he knew where there was a bees' nest, so we all quit playing and thought we would go and try to get some honey. There were Butler, Covert, Berlett, Dainus, and myself.

"Well, I thought I would try and get the honey, so I put on my gas mask, pulled my cap over my ears, wrapped a towel around my neck, and put on a long pair of gloves. The bees

were in the ground and they had a little hole for the door. So one of the fellows gave me a shovel and I started to pound on the ground. I was pounding only a few moments when all the bees started coming out. I did not mind that, but when I got stung a few times I threw the shovel away, pulled off my mask, and took to my heels through the woods, all the rest of the fellows tearing along ahead of me.

"Then we decided to try it again, and this time Covert put on the mask and pounded with the shovel. All of a sudden all the bees came out and he was stung a dozen times before he knew it. He threw the shovel away and started to run toward us with the bees after him. We beat it and he flopped down on the grass and started rolling and knocking the bees off himself while the rest of us damn near died laughing. But when we got through someone asked us what we were trying to get honey from a yellow-jackets' nest for, and the whole company laughed at us."

KER-AR-VOR

August 19th-August 29th

Leaving Clairupt at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, we hiked through Bertrichamps and turned into the mountains over the same route we had taken to the front two weeks before. This time, however, we skirted the right of Indian Village and traveled a newly filled gravel road through the woods. After toiling for a few kilometers over this difficult and hilly road we began to feel the need of a rest, which was apparently not forthcoming. However, one of the mules came to our rescue and eloquently protested by laying down in harness. Then we were given permission to fall out and rest.

When we arrived at Ker-Ar-Vor, the second line of defense, immediately behind our previous front line positions, it was 8:30 P. M.,—a clear moonlit night. Our positions proved to be miles apart as we were to hold a line approximately six kilometers from flank to flank. Company Headquarters was at Ker-Ar-Vor cantonment. The Third Platoon's positions were back of the village of Pexonne, three kilometers to the left; the Second Platoon's positions extended from the graveyard at Pexonne to a point directly behind Badonviller; the First Platoon's positions covered a front of three kilometers to the right of Badonviller and also our right flank. This platoon, however, did not get in from St. Barbe until the next day and therefore the relief of only two platoons of Company "B" of the 135th Machine Gun Battalion could be made that night. A Headquarters Platoon runner was detailed with each platoon to learn the routes from company headquarters to the new positions, to which we were guided by runners of Company "B." By 11:00 P. M. the relief of the two platoons was completed, the balance to be made by the First Platoon on the morrow. Ker-Ar-Vor was at the center of the line we were holding. At a point a few hundred yards north of company headquarters there was the junction of three roads. One led toward Badonviller, a second curved eastward through the woods to the First Platoon positions at the right flank of the sector, the third wound down through the valley to Pexonne, three kilometers to the west.

The Second Platoon positions were strung along before this highway from the junction to the Pexonne graveyard. The Third Platoon positions lay in a semi-circle that crossed the Neufmaisons road about one kilometer behind Pexonne.

Compared with other sectors of the Western Front the Baccarat sector was very quiet. Activities here were confined to raids and patrols, desultory shelling, and aerial bombing raids. The latter was the Germans' most frequent method of harassing, but seldom met with success as there were always allied planes on the alert to give battle. Our principal business in this sector was to hold the line and to learn our trade of fighting. It was of the nature of a school, with the spice of actual warfare to make it interesting.



While we were at Ker-Ar-Vor we had only two meals a day, as the food had to be carried in buckets to the men at the gun positions over miles of rough trails through the woods. Then when they finally did get it the stuff was always cold,—very pleasant!

Did you happen to be around the evening the two Y. M. C. *A. girls* called on us? Even old Sarge Byram frisked and *cavorted*!

Ask the Headquarters runners how pleasant it is to chase out in the middle of a rainy night and carry a lot of mule harness a couple of miles,—about as pleasant as standing guard at a gun position!

Tuesday, August 27th, the Skipper informed Sergeant Byram that Headquarters Platoon runners were there for whatever work was to be done around the kitchen.

“All right, boys, dig a garbage-hole!”

Wednesday, the 28th, Vic Norris returned from gas-school and became our senior gas-sniffer.

“Here, you runners, carry more water for the kitchen!”

On the Front Line

August 29th-September 14th

The move from Ker-Ar-Vor to the front line was only a matter of two or three miles of marching and, it being our second trip up, was mere routine. We knew exactly what to expect and nothing out of the ordinary occurred. We were not even surprised at the rain that was falling,—it was usually our luck to have bad weather on a move. The First and Second Platoons took up their former positions to the right of Badonviller; the Third Platoon, under Lieutenant Shultz, occupied flank positions in the woods between Pexonne and the left of Badonviller; Company Headquarters and Headquarters Runners were in Pexonne. As before, the kitchen was in the woods behind the ridge on which most of the gun positions lay. Cooks Henry Mooren and Luce were with the Headquarters Platoon at Pexonne, cooking also for the Third Platoon.

We were in the front line this time for such an unusual period that it will be possible to record only the “high-spots” of our experiences. A detailed description of Badonviller and the line will be unnecessary, as that has already been dealt with in the account of our first trip “up.”

PEXONNE

Although to the eye the size of this town was deceiving, making it appear small, it was in reality almost as large as Badonviller. It was situated on the Neufmaisons-Badonviller road, about two kilometers from the front line. All French villages in the Vosges seem to be built along similar lines, and Pexonne was no exception. The houses were of the usual type; white-washed stone; and the main portion of the town was built along the principal highway, which wound in a general northerly direction toward Badonviller. There were two other streets of importance; one leading southeast and merging at the edge of the village with the Ker-Ar-Vor road, the other connecting in the southeast with the road to Vacqueville. A single-track railroad skirted the western side of the town near the ruined potteries and ran on toward Badonviller. It had long been out of use and the station had been partially destroyed by shell-fire. In the center of the town on the main street stood the church. Its tower and spire were untouched, but ~~one~~ the corner of the building had been struck by a shell and most of the stained windows had been shattered by concussion. Unlike the usual churches in small towns, this one was not surrounded by a graveyard. The Pexonne graveyard lay outside the town on the eastern side, and is of interest to us because one of our gun positions had been there when we were in the Ker-Ar-Vor second line. The gun crew had lived in a corrugated iron shelter that had been built within a corner of the wall.

Battalion Headquarters was established in a large abandoned stone residence near the northern end of town. Captain Wedow's office and sleeping quarters were in this building. Headquarters Platoon Runners were billeted in one of the old houses near the church, the rear door of which looked out upon the ruined potteries which the Germans habitually shelled. In one of the buildings in the central part of the village the Y. M. C. A. had established a canteen, and we wish to say that it was one of the best Y. M. C. A.'s we ever had with us. Our hats are off to the "Y" man of Pexonne.

There were a few civilians in Pexonne; old men and women who braved the chance of death by shell-fire to care for the few

little gardens and orchards around the town. Most of the houses were tenantless and partially destroyed. Although there was not nearly so much "junk" in them as in those at Badonviller, it was a favorite amusement of the Runners to browse around the old structures during spare moments. The old potteries were also a favorite spot. Desultory shelling of the town and potteries only added spice to our little adventures. We had not yet learned to fear shell-fire.

Who? Who?

Private Zack was guarding the gun
At Badonviller one dark black night.
He thought he heard a prowling Hun
Approaching his post in search of a fight.

Roney and Knight and Private "Pap"
Had to their dugout just retired.
They wanted to take a little nap
And get the rest that they required.

Private Zack rushed into their den,
Roney and "Pap" grabbed forty-fives.
"Sergeant," cried Zack, "Gimme ten good men,
There's Huns up there and they want our lives!"

"Lives—Hell—Go back to your guard;
The only Huns you've ever seen
Were on some picture postal card
Or in a Y. M. C. A. magazine!"

But Zack was scared; through the door he leapt—
Made a bee-line for the big dugout,
The one where the rest of the gun crew slept
Peacefully snoring. He routed them out.

They grumbled and grunted, but mounted the path,
To run down the Huns that he had heard.
For one solid hour they searched in wrath,
But all they could find was a great big bird.

'Twas only an owl up in a tree,
Whose "Hoo! Hoo!" had frightened Zack, the guard.
They cursed him and swore that he would be,
If again he aroused them, treated hard\\

Raus Mit Him!

(Apologies to Someone.)

Though the Kaiser's short on rations
And his army on the bum,
In the final clash of Nations
The WURST is yet to come!

Runners Rats Waters and Ray Johnson were routed out of their snug bunks early one morning and ordered to make a trip up to the kitchen at the front for rations. Coming back, loaded down with "eats" for the gang, they stopped in Badonviller to rest. Rats took a chew of tobacco.

"Johnson," he remarked; "this is a Helluva note!"

"Oui! Too much like work!"

So they snooped around until they found an old baby-cart, and went merrily on their way.

Two Headquarters Runners had to take the password for the night to Lieutenant Shultz of the Third Platoon. It was a ticklish job as the infantry guards had a nasty habit of shooting first and challenging afterward. To safeguard their hides the boys whistled "Over There," "Ohio," "The Infantry" and "America, Here's My Boy."

"Damn near ran out of tunes before we got there," says one of them, "and my partner started to whistle the 'Wacht am Rhine' by mistake!"

Pay-day again, Tuesday, September 10th. Oui, Oui! C'est tres bien!

Early on the morning of Wednesday, the 11th, our French artillery, which had moved up during the night, put over a forty-minute barrage; we put over a machine gun barrage,—and the infantry went over the top in their first big raid. It was the first concentration of artillery fire we had ever heard. The infantry penetrated the enemy's third line, but the Germans had fled and only two prisoners were taken. One was mortally wounded and died before he was brought within our lines. They laid him in the first aid station at Pexonne, and all day the place was besieged by American soldiers, curious to see their first *dead German*. He was a huge, broad-shouldered, deep-chested *Prussian Guard*, and though we shed no crocodile tears over him,

most of us will admit that we at least felt sorry for the wife and children he had probably left behind him to fight for the autocracy which brought on the world's greatest and bloodiest war.

On Observation Post

Perhaps one of the softest and most interesting duties that we had to perform on the Badonviller front was Observation Guard. The man on duty sat on a little bench under an elephant-iron shelter, well camouflaged among the bushes of the steep hillside. Before him was a wonderful and beautiful panorama. Glancing to the left he could see the ruined walls, shattered red roofs, and tottering cathedral tower of the Deserted City, Badonviller. Far beyond, down the valley, a narrow white road wound up a distant hill into the German lines. To the left front, entirely surrounded by No Man's Land, lay the village of Neuville, the scene of nightly hand-to-hand encounters between Germans and American patrols. Directly across the valley on the opposite ridge was the edge of the woods that marked the German line, and beyond was a series of green ridges, each rising higher behind the other until they faded into the misty horizon. At the foot of the hill on which the observation post was situated, there was a ramshackle old mill and pond, and a narrow road that followed the base of the ridge. Further ahead, the old shell-torn, gas-stricken bit of woods projected into No Man's Land from the forest of the upper valley. No Man's Land itself, was a grassy, rolling basin, cut up by old trenches, barbed wire entanglements, and shell-craters.

The observation guard's duty was to jot down in a notebook all activities of the enemy that he could see, such as shelling, air activities, machine gun and rifle fire, and movements on the roads of the enemy's rear. He noted the time of each occurrence and a report was sent daily to the division intelligence department.

On one day in particular, the guard had a great deal to report. Early that morning Lieutenant Tilden had taken the First Platoon guns out into No Man's Land and swept the German front with concentrated machine gun fire, retiring to the cover of our ridge before daybreak. This was not the first time we had harassed Jerry in that manner, but this time we "got his goat." At daybreak he sent up seven observation balloons—sausages—to try to locate us. They were strung out in a long line, a mile or two behind his front. A few of his planes came over and soared back and forth high above No Man's Land until chased back by our anti-aircraft guns or our planes. Now and

then he threw over a few shells, apparently at random, in hope of hitting something. One could hear their shrill whine, see the cloud of smoke and shower of earth as they ploughed into the ground at the base of the ridge, and a second later hear the crashing explosion. They always fell short of our positions and did no damage. About once every half hour a squadron of our planes would cross the lines and one by one the sausages would duck down, while Jerry's anti-aircraft guns got busy, flecking the sky with puffs of black bursting shrapnel, and causing the valley to echo with their dull explosions. But Jerry was patient and persistent, and, no sooner than our planes left his lines, he sent up his balloons again. These tactics continued all day, but, it is safe to say, they availed him nothing. All he had succeeded in doing was to cause our observation guard a great deal of extra work and an unusual amount of "cussing."

Once upon a midnight dreary,
I walked post,—weak and weary.
Came a sound quite queery, leery,
Stealing over No Man's Land.
I put my rifle to my shoulder,
Rested it upon a boulder,
And, my body growing colder,
Waited for the wily Hun.
My teeth a chattering sound were making,
My nerves were all a-quaking, quaking,
And my knees together shaking,
In the darkness and the gloom.
Then upon my ears came stealing
The sound that set my heart a-reeling,
A shrill and ghostly sort of squealing
Issued from a dugout door.
'Twas a screech-owl!—Nothing more!

(Apologies to Poe.)

—JOSEPH HERMAN.

When our kitchen went into its old place in the woods, Sergeant Byram found it wasn't such a safe place as he had formerly thought. The kitchen of the company we relieved had been struck by gas and H. E. shells and the surrounding woods torn up considerably. Therefore, this second time up to the front, he wasn't so prone to run around with lighted candles, much to *the relief of the cooks.*

"Old Dog" Mills seems to have it in for Mule-Leader Lyman Rood. He tells the following tale: On the night of September 14th the First Platoon pulled a good hoax on Rood. Rood's squad knew he was coming up that night with his mule and cart to get the gun and equipment, as we were being relieved. They laid a deep plot. Rood being naturally a nervous man, his nearness to Jerry did not alleviate his feeling any, and he was easy bait. Just as he pulled in near the line someone threw a grenade into a trench near him. Rood seemed petrified for a moment, and then someone sounded the gas-alarm. He came to with a jerk and had his mask on in a jiffy, his knees knocking together. At the order "Remove Masks," he hesitated and then took it off. A rat made a racket in a pile of old debris nearby, and Rood whipped out his Gat and began to fire frantically into the brush toward the German lines. Then he swore up and down that he was gassed in the eyes! No one doubts Rood's courage, but he really was a funny greenhorn his first night in the trenches.

Bugler Speary says: "One night on the Badonviller front we buglers and the cooks, having played cards all evening, went to bed about 11:30. Jerry had been dropping quite a lot of shells into our woods that night. Well, about 1:00 A. M. I was awakened by someone groaning. It was Cook Luther, and he had the dyspepsia, and wanted me to go with him to the first aid station. We got up the road about a hundred yards when all of a sudden Jerry sent over a shell,—then another, and another.

"Luther took a deep breath and says, 'Let's go back, Speary, I'm better now!'"



We Leave the Front

September 14th

We bade farewell to the Badonviller front at 9:00 o'clock the evening of Saturday, the 14th. We were relieved by French troops and, after considerable difficulty with them, due to lack of knowledge of their language, saw them well settled in the positions and then formed up on the Pexonne-Neufmaisons road. We were very much surprised when we failed to turn in at Indian Village. Most of us had thought we were to spend the night there and push on the next day, but such was not the case. Then we drew the conclusion that we would halt at Clairrupt, but instead we kept on and entered the great barrier of wild mountains, beyond which lay Rambervillers. We passed the cluster of houses near LaChapelle, where we had billeted overnight on our first trip to the front, and then lost all hope. Beyond that point the country for almost twenty kilometers was uninhabited. If we were to sleep that night it must be either in pup-tents in the mountains or in far distant St. Benoit, the first village on the other side of the hills.

When we entered those rough highlands it was nearly midnight and we were already approaching exhaustion. A weary march still lay before us. No words can adequately describe a soldier's feelings when every fibre of his being is crying for rest and sleep; when the dead weight of his pack is growing heavier at each step; when his head is whirling because of the strain in keeping to the dark, rough road. It would be folly to attempt such a description. Only a man who has endured it knows what it means, and even he, unless he be a wizard with words, cannot convey it to another who has never known the experience. When we came out of the hills it was 6:00 o'clock in the morning, and to our consternation we found that we were not to stop at St. Benoit! Where now? For two hours we dragged and straggled along the winding roads of the valley in such a blind stagger that we scarcely noticed the several towns through which we passed. Even the mules were beginning to fail; their leaders, themselves worn out, had to literally drag and beat them onward. Our column was frayed and broken, for we were now in such condition that only the very strongest could "hang on." No one deliberately fell out of ranks. Every man stuck to it to the limit of his ability, but many a man found it impossible to close up the slowly widening space between him and the man ahead. As a consequence,—the platoons half a mile apart, and each platoon stretched out over twice its usual road-space,—the company *wound over the roads like a long disjointed caterpillar.*

At last came the final halt and the Captain gave orders to remove packs and fall out. We were in the village of Housseras, seven kilometers southeast of Rambervillers. It was 9:00 o'clock

before we finally got into our billets and, our forced march of forty-two kilometers over, we flopped down in the straw and feel asleep, too tired even to go to mess.



Housseras

As we stayed in Housseras only two days, scarcely long enough for us to recover from the effects of our long march, we found very little there to interest us. We were there all day Sunday, September 15th, and until Monday evening. Nor have we any very pleasant memories of the place. It was merely a gangling village,

strung out in a rough semi-circle along the high-road to Rambervillers. The billets were, as usual, in the lofts, and were so dirty and full of straw-fleas that most of us pitched pup-tents in disgust.

Rambervillers

September 16th-September 18th

We left Housseras on the evening of the 16th at about 8:00 P. M., and hiked seven kilometers to the city of Rambervillers, where we went directly to the rail-head and pitched pup-tents for the night. Many of us merely spread our blankets in the shelter of a high hedge and slept in the open.

In the morning we found that the whole regiment was concentrated in the vicinity in various nooks and corners along the railroad. Of course, rumors of all kinds were afloat. Some said we were going to a rest camp, others insisted that our destination was Italy, but the rumor that was strongest, and seemed most likely to be true, was that we were to hold a portion of the front around Verdun.

While we were awaiting the arrival of our transportation, all of us who could get away from the clutches of sergeants and officers spent our time wandering about the town. We found it

to be another paradise like Raon-le-Etape,—full of all sorts of stores and wineshops. It was, to us, a large city, we having had access only to “one-horse” villages for the past two months, with the exception of “Raon.” A small stream ran through the center of the town between artificial walls, similar to a canal. Just off the main street along this stream, was a small square or park, enclosed by a low stone wall. Within were shade trees and benches, where both the civilian and military population gathered for a little recreation, much as we do in our city parks at home. This spot was also used as an encampment by both French and American soldiers on their way to and from the front. Around the outskirts of Rambervillers were quite a number of aeroplane sheds or hangars, it being the aviation center for the Baccarat Sector.

“Private Seaman,” asked the Captain, “why should a soldier be ready to die for his country?”

“Sure, Captain,” he said. “You’re quite right. Why should he?”

Rambervillers to Tremont

September 18th-September 19th

Evidently it had been extremely difficult to procure cars, for when our section finally did arrive many of the men had to ride without shelter on the flat-cars that carried the kitchen, escort wagon, ration-cart, and water-cart. Part of the company was on the section that departed the day before; only Headquarters Platoon, the train, and a portion of another platoon left on this section.

We pulled out about 4:00 P. M. on the road leading northwest to Gerbeviller. Continuing northwest, having stopped at Blainville while mess was served, we passed through Nancy at 9:00 P. M. and turned in a general westerly direction toward Toul. Shortly after midnight it began to rain, and those unfortunates on flat-cars took refuge under the wagons, although, indeed, it availed them but little shelter from the driving rain. We had left Toul behind and our route now took us through Commercy, Lerouville, and Bar-le-Duc, to Revigny, a large rail-head. Here we detrained at 5:30 A. M. It was still raining steadily and the task of unloading was made doubly difficult.

Dawn showed us a dreary sight of dripping wagons, horses, mules, men and equipment, muddy roads, and grey hills. The time *that passed before we finally formed a column on the road seemed*

interminable. We were all soaked and very much disgusted; a situation aggravated by standing around with packs on. To make matters worse, when we did start, each man was ordered to carry along a few sticks of firewood for the kitchen. However, most of that went into the ditches before we had gone a hundred yards, and so did not plague us long.

After hiking for two hours, we halted along the roadside near a small village. Here we had a breakfast of coffee, cold beans, "monkey-meat," and hardtack, and then continued the march. We were going south and could not understand why we were going away from the front. It appeared that we must be going to rest-camp, although that seemed too good to be true. Evidently we were somewhere in the rear of a fairly active sector, for all the towns we passed through were full of Americans and the roads were busy with military traffic. The strange sight of not only one, but many dead horses, along the roadside, told us that we were near a lively front, and inquiry brought the information that these conditions had prevailed for the past week. We were told that the front was about fifty kilometers to the north and that American troops were being concentrated in great numbers in this area. It was whispered that we were going away from the front only because all billets in the north were occupied. We were going with many other divisions into a great offensive around Verdun!

At about 1:00 P. M. we reached our destination, the village of Tremont, to which the rest of the company had preceded us. One platoon, we found, was at the nearby town of Robert Espagne, on anti-aircraft service. That portion of our company in Tremont was billeted in wooden barracks near the far end of the village. Our kitchen was established in a house, where there had formerly been a French army "cuisine." It was not necessary to use our rolling kitchen, as the great round iron kettles had been left set up and ready for use by our French comrades.

The rain continued almost without cessation all day and throughout the night; the billets were leaky and a few of us got wet. This, however, did not prevent us from sleeping well, for we were very tired. When the dawn of September 20th broke over the hills it was misty and damp, but before noon the sun was shining fitfully. Soon afterward the sky cleared completely and the day was warm and pleasant.

It had been rumored that we were to make a long journey on trucks, and we were told early that day to roll packs and be ready to move at 3:00 P. M. Sure enough, in the afternoon the trucks began to arrive; for a couple of hours a constant stream of them went by the billets and formed a train on the high-road

beyond the town. They were driven by Chinese chauffeurs in variegated uniforms of all the Allies. On later acquaintance we found that they could speak a little French. We could not understand how they had learned even so little of a language that "stumped" most of us. They were a motley bunch, indeed. It was 6:30 P. M. before the whole infantry battalion and our company had been loaded on the trucks and we had started on our rumbling, bumping journey; whither, no one knew.

We had been on our way for two hours and a half when we passed through Bar-le-Duc. The truck-train was extremely slow moving, and many halts had been made. After we left Bar-le-Duc, however, we began to make great speed, for the roads were as wide and smooth as any boulevard, and the night was clear, with a bright moon. Most of the roads in France are wonderful specimens of highway engineering; one wonders how they continue to stand up under the constant battering of military truck-traffic.

Sixteen to eighteen men were packed into each truck, and for every man there was a blanket roll. Of course it was impossible for more than two or three to lie down; the rest had to sit on the wooden benches which ran the length of each side of the truck, and doze in cramped positions. To add to our discomfort, the weather turned colder and we shivered as the night air rushed past. A truck trip at the best is a miserable affair! We traveled steadily until 10:30 the next morning, when we unloaded in a desolate rolling bit of country near a small village. It had again begun to rain slightly and we found the field in which we were ordered to pitch pup-tents to be wet and cold. "C'est la guerre," however,—and we took the matter philosophically. A Frenchman, in charge of the train, told us we were about thirty kilometers from the front. That night we moved into billets in the dilapidated old village. Its name still remains unknown to us.

We spent the next day, Sunday, in welcome rest, as we were not to leave until darkness came to shield our movements. Most of us slept late and spent the rest of the morning and the entire afternoon playing cards, shooting crap, or cooking in our mess-pans; producing various conglomerations that would make the average civilian sick even to look at, but which tasted mighty good to us. Our principal ingredients of these stews were the immortal "Willie" or "Monkey-meat," and canned tomatoes. These were our first hot meals for about forty-eight hours.

While we were at this place a few men remembered seeing a government commissary at a town about four kilometers back, when *we passed through* on the trucks. In hope of securing something *to eat in the form of* canned goods, and also some tobacco or cigar-

ettes, many of us hiked over the hills to this village. To our great surprise and indignation the lieutenant in charge refused to sell to us, even though we explained the situation in full to him, telling him that we wanted the tobacco, especially, very badly. He was obdurate, and refused to sell us a single thing on the grounds that we were not men of the Third Army Corps. To add to our anger and disappointment it began to rain, and cussing him roundly most of us started back to our quarters. A few, however, whose indignation was exceedingly great, and whose need of tobacco spurred them to another effort, remained behind and held a council. They concluded that the reason they had been recognized as not belonging to organizations quartered in that town, was obviously the fact that they wore gas-masks, helmets, and side-arms. Acting accordingly, they took these things off and left one man to guard them. The ruse worked beautifully, and the Q. M. officer never even batted an eye as they ordered and paid for their purchases. Loaded down with canned goods and tobacco they went on their way rejoicing.

At 8:00 P. M. the company formed up and started on the night-hike which was to end—we knew not where! As time slipped by, it grew extremely dark, and threatened rain. The roads were slimy with the accumulation of mud from the past week, and marching was very difficult. We had been on the way about two hours when a heavy rainstorm broke suddenly upon us. Before we could unsling packs and get into our slickers we were soaked. The average army-issue slicker leaks like a sieve and is more like a wet blanket than a protection against the weather, so we were in bad shape. The rain continued and the roads became rivers of gray mud.

It was nearly twelve o'clock when we descended into the deep valley in which lies the badly battered town of Recicourt. The rain had ceased temporarily, and we halted near a watering-trough to fill our canteens. We concluded that we were to be billeted in the village, but were soon disillusioned. The march was again taken up, and passing through the town, we toiled up the opposite steep hills. At a point about two kilometers beyond Recicourt, we halted in a dense woods. We could see the dim outlines of long wooden sheds, apparently stables for animals, among the trees near the road-side. Again it began to rain, this time a steady drizzle. We waited for ten or fifteen minutes and then were ordered to find shelter under any of the stables, for stables they proved to be. We found them full of chests and all kinds of debris among which we stumbled around in the gloom until each had found room to lie down. By huddling together in pairs and lying, front to back, on our sides, with our overcoats and slickers to cover us, we managed to snatch a bit of sleep. Then in the morning we were moved to dry dugouts, which we should have had the night before, but did not get until

now for reasons unknown. Our kitchen had not arrived, but one of the cooks undertook to prepare a meal in an old French kitchen and at noon we were given hot coffee, hot "bully," syrup, and bread. It sure seemed good.

In the Dug-Outs near Recicourt

September 23rd-25th

The dugouts which we occupied as reserve troops in the Avocourt Sector were undoubtedly the best we had ever been in. The road to Recicourt ran along the base of a low ridge, and our dugouts were burrowed into the side of it. They were walled and roofed with "elephant iron," supported by strong timbers, and the ends were boarded up; the openings toward the road having small hinged doors for entrance and ventilation. The bunks were built in tiers along each side, three pair on a side, making twelve in all. Their frames were of wood and their bottoms of interlocked steel wire.

During the three days we were there we had ample proof that the place was, or would soon be, an active portion of the front. Reference to the map showed that we were about fifteen miles west of Verdun. Every morning and evening we could hear the dull booming of cannon and the whistle of shells. Several times during the nights we were aroused by gas alarms. But the feature of greatest note was the steady stream of trucks, wagons, and men that choked the road day and night. The highway was churned into a ribbon of deep mud by the constant pounding it received. Truck-loads of food, equipment, rifle ammunition, artillery ammunition, and all sorts of supplies went by unceasingly. Guns, caissons, and gun carriages drawn by many teams of horses, or by huge lumbering tractors, passed in great number. Of these there were both American and French. France and America were preparing to strike the greatest blow the Hun had ever received and apparently cared little whether or not he knew it, for the possibility of air observations did not decrease their efforts in the least. Of course, they depended upon the great fleets of Allied planes to prevent observation to any great degree. If one of two Hun fliers did penetrate our lines the anti-aircraft guns went into action, and co-operating with the planes, drove them away, but traffic went on unheedingly.

Our kitchen finally arrived the day after we got in, and we began to get good meals again. They had had a long tough trip over the busy roads. Most of our spare time was spent in cleaning up our equipment; getting the guns, tripods, pistols, and ammunition ready for action. The last outgoing mail was accepted for censoring at noon, the 25th.

Late in the afternoon, Wednesday, the 25th, we turned in our blanket rolls and all surplus equipment, retaining only our overcoats, helmets, gas-masks, sidearms, and light packs, containing reserve rations and slickers. After very little delay we fell into column of squads with the mules and carts and started toward the front. The roads were simply teeming with men and vehicles. The great drive was to start at dawn the morrow and the last of the gigantic preparations were being crowded into place. Slowly, very slowly, we forged on. Halts were numerous, due to traffic tangles which had to be untangled. It was about 7:30 P. M., twilight, when we turned into a by-road that led along a ridge or table-land, heavily wooded with tall trees, most of which had been stripped of their branches by old shellfire and were now overgrown with vines and creepers. We followed the road a short distance and then turned aside and halted among the trees to take advantage of what little cover they afforded.

The Runners of Headquarters Platoon were taken down toward the front to Major Houts' field headquarters, which had been established in a deep hollow. There ensued a wait of nearly half an hour before the gun-carts began to arrive and discharge their loads of machine-guns, tripods, waterboxes and ammunition boxes. Meanwhile, the last vestige of day-light had gone and the desultory crashing and flashing of nearby artillery, accompanied by the rumbling of distant guns all along the line, became more apparent. Occasionally an enemy shell whistled overhead or exploded somewhere in the dense woods. Then a new and strange noise was heard; a puffing and grinding, rattling and clattering sound. The tanks were coming. Soon they appeared where the road entered the hollow; funny, clumsy boxes built of steel and mounted on caterpillar tractors, or long, jointed steel belts that clawed at the road as they crept onward. In the turret of each tank was a narrow rectangular port through which peeped the muzzles of one-pounders and machine-guns. They were the new "baby tanks" and did not carry as heavy armament as their bigger brothers. A long stream of them, probably a hundred in all, filed steadily past, panting and grunting as they sidled around the bend in the road and disappeared.

As the gun platoons arrived the equipment was taken off the carts. In single file, each man with a gun, tripod, or two ammunition boxes, we started toward the front line over a path which wound through the woods, past battery after battery of big guns, and merged itself with a narrow, slippery, rough trail, beset with pitfalls of every description. This trail—it scarcely deserves the name—led in a general northwesterly direction through wild, dense woods, full of tangled undergrowth, vines, and creepers. It was a veritable jungle; old roots tripped us, vines that ran along the ground entangled our feet, trees felled by shellfire blocked the way.

old barbed wire caught at our clothing and imbedded its barbs in our flesh, thorny bushes scratched our faces and hands, innumerable shell-holes, old and new, caught us unawares in the darkness, causing us to slip on their treacherous rims and slide into their watery bottoms. Due to the recent heavy rains, the path itself was slimy with mud. We had to rest frequently, stopping in sheer exhaustion from the weight of our loads. Finally, after what seemed ages, we emerged into a cleared valley and were ordered by Lieutenant Tilden to lay down our equipment and take a good rest. This little valley was our reserve line and many doughboys were concentrated behind the barren ridge. Beyond, were our first and second lines, and "Jerry."

It was now about 11:00 P. M. and having rested ten minutes, chatting among ourselves and heartily cussing the Kaiser, we again shouldered our burden and, in a long line, filed over the crest of the ridge. We were now on a broad rolling table-land or series of grassy minor ridges. The night was fairly clear and we felt that we must be easily discernible to the enemy. The way was comparatively clear; it was necessary only a few times to pass back the warning "Heads up! Wire!" After having progressed about two kilometers we entered a communicating trench which connected with a board walk, or long low bridge, which crossed a swampy bit of ground. At the end of it was the second line, behind another low fold in the land. Here, again, we found a host of men waiting for the dawn of "the day." The captain met us and we rested for over half an hour, awaiting orders.

At about twelve o'clock our artillery began to open up from the hills behind. The initial bombardment was on! Steadily the thundering of the guns grew in intensity—seventy-fives, six-inch, nine-inch, great naval guns, combined in an every increasing roar. The ridges for miles spat livid flame as battery after battery came into action. The sky was lit up with red and orange reflections of light that flickered like sheet lightning. Hundreds, thousands of shells whistled overhead; the seventy-fives with the short wicked hiss of escaping steam, the sixes and nines with a slightly duller, but equally fearsome sound, the huge naval and siege gun shells with a long, slow, throbbing whine, gas shells of every size with their peculiar "wobble." Suddenly the trench howitzers, virtually alongside of us in the second line, began to crash. Showers of sparks burst from their muzzles. The enemy began to return the bombardment and shrapnel and high-explosives burst above and around us. Having reached a high pitch of intensity, the great barrage kept on through the night, never faltering, never weakening. Jerry was sure catching Hell!

Meanwhile, that part of the infantry which was to form the first wave began to file through communicating trenches to the

front line. Our company waited until they were in their places. A runner came across the board walk from the rear and informed the captain that a ration party coming up with "slum" and coffee was almost exhausted and needed aid. Three runners were sent back to help them. Ten or fifteen minutes later the company took up the equipment and started on the last lap to the front line. The communicating trench which we followed was ankle deep, and in places knee deep with sticky, watery ooze. It was a long, weary struggle before we reached our positions with the first-wave infantry. Then we loafed in the deep front line trench, awaiting the zero hour—5:30 A. M. During this time we endured a harassing shellfire and witnessed for the first time the actual wounding of comrades in battle. Several infantrymen were stricken before the drive started. At about 4:30 A. M. the ration party arrived with two great cans of "slum" and coffee. The captain himself took charge of the "feeding" and though the stuff was cold after its long trip, how we did enjoy it!



The zero hour was approaching. At 5:20 A. M. Major Houts passed the word to prepare to go over. The doughboys gripped their rifles tightly. We machine-gunners looked carefully over the guns, testing their mechanism, and making sure that the tripods were clamped and strapped tightly. The ammunition and water boxes were inspected to make sure that the belts of cartridges were not jammed and that there was plenty of water. The steam hoses and spare parts kits were given the "once-over." Helmet straps were adjusted, waist-belts given a reassuring little hitch, pack straps fixed comfortably, and leggings fastened securely.

Meanwhile the great barrage went on with seemingly ever increasing volume. We all set our watches to conform with that of the captain. The minutes passed unnoticed; three men actually snatched a little sleep. We chatted with one another on minor topics, usually far removed from the present situation. We cannot help wondering at the absolute coolness with which we spent those last few minutes before the attack. Perhaps it was merely blissful ignorance!

We looked at our watches—5:29!

"Well," some private remarked, "damn near time—gimme a chew." Those men who chewed tobacco took a generous mouthful.

Suddenly there came a definite change in the sound of our barrage. It settled, rather was augmented and concentrated, into a steady deep-throated roar like that of the Niagara. We knew instantly that the moment had come and quivered with the realization.

"Let's go, boys!" shouted Major Houts in his deep bass voice, *which carried above that awful din as it had carried over the drill-fields in old Camp Sheridan.*

Up over the parapet we scrambled, boosting and dragging one another to the level of No Man's Land, and as we started forward a great broad flare of red, white, and blue lit up the sky—America was striking!

Special details had been previously sent out to cut dozens of paths through our barbed wire entanglements. Pouring out through these lanes like a black flood we formed our combat groups and began an orderly movement toward the German lines. We had no sooner begun our advance than the enemy sent up great flares. Myriads of star-shells burned overhead with bluish-white light; rockets burst in showers of little stars; broad fan-like flares mounted the heavens like the flames from a hundred smelters; green, red, and white signal lights, like the fiery balls of Roman candles, hung in the sky, flickered and went out; long squirming "caterpillars" sailed upward to float high in the air, their little chains of lights burning steadily and then, one by one, disappearing. It was the most magnificent display of fireworks any of us had ever witnessed; the whole horizon seemed enveloped in a great conflagration, so stupendous in its proportions that we were momentarily awed and shaken.

Our advance continued steadily. Only the shrill whistles could now be depended upon to convey orders above the titanic, churning, shriek and roar of shells. When the flares were brightest we crouched in the thousands of shellholes, or "froze" rigidly in our tracks. We could see the bellying smoke and flying earth in the garish light, where our barrage was falling. When the light died down we trudged on toward the goal.

At the time we could only guess at the battle's proportion, but the far distant flashes up and down that long range of hills, and the steady, throbbing rumble of still more distant guns told us that we were initiating one of the greatest offensives of the war. The very thought that the Thirty-Seventh had been one of the divisions chosen to "shock" the line was enough to inspire us, to say nothing of the realization that "the folks at home" tomorrow would be reading of the things we did that day!

Thinking these thoughts as we pressed ever onward, we felt a welling up of strange sensations. When a man felt it, his teeth clenched involuntarily, his chest rose and fell rapidly, his fists automatically closed tightly, and with a very perceptible tremor his muscles pulled together rigidly. We were undergoing that "keying up" without which a man could not possibly endure the terrific strain required of him. It must be much the same sensation which causes the tautening ripple of muscles and bristling of hair on a dog's back when he scents danger or a fight. After a short time the keyed-up feeling seemed natural and we took no further notice of it.

Still another great emotion was born in us as we found time to gaze out over the battle-fields. We saw thousands of helmeted silhouettes bearing bayoneted rifles or the deadly machine guns through barbed wire and shell holes, dragging the little one-pounder guns over the rugged ground, and struggling with heavy ammunition boxes. An armed host, every man going in one direction, with one purpose, and all advancing in relentless systematic order. We were a part of it! Call it egotism if you will, but we felt that great pride of our nationality coursing through our veins. We were Power, and nothing could stop us. We were Americans!

But "Jerry" was not permitting us to come on unhindered. Shrapnel was bursting above us, before us, beside us, behind us. High explosives were falling in a systematic barrage. The air rapidly became reeking with the odor of burnt powder and chemicals. We occasionally smelled irritating poisonous gas and had to use our masks.

Now and then one of the dusky forms would stagger, reel, and crumple in a heap; struck by a flying bit of shrapnel or a shell fragment. Again, there would come a blinding flash and a terrific explosion—four or five comrades disappeared. It was ugly, sickening, unnerving, but our training and our "keying up" overcame the nausea we could not help but feel. The only effect was a further tightening of the jaws.

After a while we were ordered to spread out slightly, but we bore on. And, as a matter of course, we were learning shell dodging. Observations and reasoning told us that to "flop" was our only salvation. We found that a shell's point of impact could be judged by the sound it made. When they came close we flopped, and flopped flat!

And with us always was that never ceasing roar. Can we forget it? The collected thunder of a hundred thousand years seemed to be tumbling around our heads.

Presently the light of dawn spread slowly over the land and the flares became dimmer and fewer in number. Our artillery, from the hills behind us, laid down a smoke barrage, and into this we plunged. We had now reached the German front line; rather, the place where it had once been. Groping our way through the gray vapor, we entered a strip of land, every foot of which had been literally pulverized. Everywhere, on every side—nothing but yawning shell craters, cluttered with broken timbers, twisted bars of steel from dugout roofs, broken rifles, torn German packs, and all sorts of debris. It gave the impression that a gigantic series of dynamite charges had been exploded simultaneously and had turned *the whole terrain* upside down. Indeed, the barrage that was let *loose upon the Germans* that night was infinitely worse. Those

remains of the famous Hindenburg Line bore mute witness to the fact.

While our great smoke screen shielded our advancing combat groups from the enemy, it caused extreme difficulty in the maintenance of liaison, the most important part of any army. A certain amount of confusion resulted which was not fully corrected until we had passed out of the screen. For liaison, or communications between units, we were almost entirely dependent upon runners. Especially was this true of units in the first and second waves, of which our company was a part. A runner, sent out with a message, lost sight of his own body of troops before he had gone twenty yards. Unless he was equipped with a compass and knew the exact relation of position of his and other commands, he easily became lost. Even with the knowledge of compass bearings and the rate of advance, regaining his unit was guesswork. As a matter of fact, very few runners had this information and consequently many were lost for hours at a time. Other men, also—often large groups of them—being separated from their outfits by chance shellfire or orders to spread out, wandered helplessly about or attached themselves to the other advancing units.

In spite of these very important difficulties the general advance went on, only slightly impeded, each company "steering" by the compass. Meanwhile, overhead could be heard the buzzing of Allied planes, observing the drive. As yet we could not determine whether or not the German aircraft were giving battle.

As we swept over Jerry's front line we killed or captured the few men who had been left to hold us up. Their fate depended entirely upon the amount of resistance they offered—usually none at all. Having cleaned up the front line, we now entered an equally devastated wilderness of tangled undergrowth, thorn-bushes, barbed wire defences, and dense woods of tall trees. Every step was fraught with a thousand difficulties. A veritable maze of barbed wire extended through the place, strung and criss-crossed from tree to tree, and hidden by the underbrush. We had struck the famous Argonne Forest.

Up to this point we had encountered only artillery fire. Now, as we sweated and struggled to tear our way through this barrier, the machine gun bullets began to sing around us. Our smoke screen no longer was there to cover us, for we had reached higher ground. We fought a tooth-and-nail fight with even the odds of Nature against us. It is impossible to recount that raging battle in minute detail. We were hammering at dozens of machine-gun nests at a time and as fast as we reduced them, and, scratched and bleeding, plunged through the bushes to further our advance, we found ourselves up against an equal or greater number. We outflanked them.

or took them by frontal attack, aided by one-pounders and machine guns. Daring men sneaked upon them through the brush, and silenced them with hand grenades. We lost lives, but the advance continued.

Skulking Germans were driven out by the moppers-up, whose business it was to follow the first wave and investigate every nook and cranny of the bushes, trees, old trenches, and dugouts. If any were found who offered resistance they were promptly shot down or bayoneted, or driven from their hiding places with hand grenades.

Shrapnel and H. E. plagued us at varied intervals—whenever a momentary lull of our artillery permitted the enemy to open up with his. When our guns regained fire superiority the German fire weakened.

The enemy's second and third lines fell and by noon we had penetrated far into the forest fastnesses in spite of this continued stubborn opposition. The country was ideal for just the type of resistance in which the Germans were adept. Their machine-guns popped away at us from behind every form of cover. In addition to being well camouflaged, most of them were in pillboxes or concrete emplacements reinforced with steel, which our rifle and machine-gun fire could not penetrate. Snipers, hidden in shell-craters, dugouts, copses, and trees, harassed us incessantly. The land being heaved up in a series of heavily wooded parallel ridges, every valley and clearing was a death-trap. It was gruelling, tough, costly fighting; a sort of Indian warfare such as our forefathers must have known in the forests of the New World.

It was in conquering this first tract of wilderness that we lost our first man, Herbert Stolte. We had been engaged in reducing a machine-gun nest and, having silenced it, were dismounting our guns and preparing to move forward. Stolte was instantly killed while removing the tripod of his gun. A bullet struck him in the armpit as he was shouldering the burden. As word of his death passed from man to man, horror, and then a mad desire for vengeance, clutched us. Shortly afterward, Jimmy Wilson got a machine-gun bullet through the neck near the collar bone. We began to "see red".

In spite of the ever stiffening opposition we lunged from ridge to ridge, and won the way through the first great forest barrier by early afternoon. At the famous "Crossroads" in the woods we fought an ordinary pitched battle and hurled ourselves upon the Huns until, quivering with losses, their line crumpled and they withdrew to a point before Mountfaucou.

We had been advancing too swiftly for the artillery supporting us, which was having great difficulty in moving up through the *devastated terrain* we had won. We therefore were forced to halt

on the very edge of the forest and throw out outposts, or islands of resistance, in the open valley ahead.

Behind our lines thousands of Engineers were already laboring to build temporary roads through the shell stricken land; using logs, planks, bundles of brush, and all sorts of materials in their construction; even the stones from the ruined houses in Avocourt were pounded into bits with hammers and carried in little sacks to help provide a foundation. As fast as the new road crept forward, the long line of trucks and wagons moved ahead—they could move no faster than the road itself! Artillery, however, had to get through no matter what the cost, and sweating horses and cursing men strove to press on through the mire and wreckage. And all the while German shells were wreaking havoc among them. The traffic and communication problems were indeed fraught with danger and almost insurmountable difficulties.

Up on the line, we busied ourselves consolidating our positions with an eye for counter attacks, and then settled down for the night, each man in his little fox-hole. Sleep, of course, was clearly out of the question, for the Germans shelled the woods constantly. It was possible to snatch a few moments of oblivion now and then, but restful repose could not be had.

In the morning we received word that the artillery could not give us any support, as they had been unable to move up sufficient guns during the night. In place of that we were to have tanks to help us, but 8:30 A. M. came and none had yet appeared. Orders came to advance without them. Forming in combat columns, we moved out of the covering forest into the cleared valley ahead. The enemy had withdrawn his lines further during the night and we encountered only weak shell-fire.

On our right front, two kilometers to the northeast, was the famous city of Mountfaucon, one of the three great objectives of the offensive—Mountfaucon, Cierges, and Sedan. Rising 342 metres above sea-level, it was the dominating height of the Argonne; more than 30 metres higher than any other eminence between the Meuse and the Argonne on either side of the old battle line. From an observation post on Mountfaucon it is said that the Crown Prince watched the many fruitless assaults upon Verdun in 1916. Even Dead Man's Hill and Hill 304, which figured so prominently in that struggle, were overtopped by it. French army strategists had declared unequivocally that the height was impregnable.

We swiftly advanced over two crests of land which was unobstructed by trees or brush, but thickly sown with barbed wire.

On the far side of the second crest, two abandoned 155-millimeter guns were found. They were well supplied with ammuni-

tion which was stored in wicker cases nearby. The doughboys turned one gun around and fired a dozen rounds in the direction of the enemy; a stunt which caused Jerry to become excited and send over a few planes to discover whence came this unexpected harassing. They were at once assailed by our planes, and driven off after a lively air battle. Near these abandoned guns were several dugouts sheltered by a clump of old apple trees, among them a very snug place which had evidently been used as an artillery command post by the Germans. It was fitted with telephones and signal systems communicating with their old lines around the Crossroads. Our Medical Detachment speedily transformed it into an advanced dressing station.

We now mounted the third ridge, which was covered by orchards on the near side. The divisions' right flank was now storming Montfaucon. Emerging from the orchards we found ourselves upon a bare, flat crest or plain, and up against an extensive system of trenches and barbed wire entanglements, many of which were twenty yards in width. Beyond lay more such defences. Through these we cut our way with considerable difficulty, harassed by well directed shellfire and spraying shrapnel, and moved on across the open plateau for half a kilometer. Here we were confronted by a shallow valley dominated by another rise in the land beyond. Our company was supporting the first wave of infantry, and, following a few yards behind them, we descended the bare slope.

Suddenly hell broke loose from three sides; machine guns opened up on us from both flanks and front, whizzbangs exploded amongst us, trench mortars, Minnie Wurfers, "flying pigs," and big H. E.'s descended upon us with terrifying crashes, and rifle fire augmented the extreme danger of our predicament.

Everywhere in that little valley our boys were seeking cover, in the shell-holes, behind logs, and knolls, and in the sparse brush. To remain standing meant almost certain death—dozens were almost literally riddled with bullets. To hug the earth was only a shade safer because of the countless falling shells. Men running for cover toppled down in their tracks; others were stricken where they lay, by flying shrapnel and shell fragments; many more were blown to bits by direct hits from big shells or killed by concussion. The valley was rapidly becoming a shambles.

But we had with us a cool leader, Lieutenant John A. Tilden. Under his direction we made a tremendous effort, and with a hundred narrow escapes won our way back up the hill. All twelve of our Vickers guns were set up in a row along the bare crest and went instantly into action. Over the heads of our helplessly trapped *infantry* we directed a sustained, concentrated fire. Twelve guns *spat out bullets* at the rate of nearly six hundred per minute, and

with marvelous effect. The Germans were driven from their vantage place and began to flee in disordered retreat over the opposite hill. Our fire cut great swaths among them. We could see them struggling and scrambling to escape, throwing away rifles, helmets, and packs as they went. They were cut down ten or fifteen at a time; our gunners could plainly see the effect of our fire, and direct it accordingly.

Four minutes of steady firing cleared the hill of the enemy and silenced his machine guns, this enabling our comrades of the infantry to escape from the valley. It also drew the attention of the enemy artillery to us, and we began to get all their fire—that is ever the fate of machine-gunners.

Our positions offered no concealment whatsoever and had been used only because of the emergency. In getting the guns into action, Lieutenant Tilden had recklessly exposed himself; the men had risen to the need with supreme coolness and courage. He now saw that to remain any longer than necessary in this exposed position would mean the annihilation of his entire command. Thrun, Brahler, and Griswold had been killed by whizz-bangs while working heroically to bring more ammunition to the guns. Speary and Barbour had been wounded by machine gun bullets, Walter White and Bartow by shell fragments.

While engaged in the perilous task of getting the guns out of action and into the cover of a small trench about one hundred yards back, the Lieutenant was caught by a whizz-bang and fell with a mangled leg and arm. At the same instant, Privates Vic Earl and Morgan were wounded. A second later another whizz-bang got Privates Olin Smith and Lloyd Wheeler. Wheeler's arms were torn cruelly by large fragments and hung limply from his shoulders.

The wounded were dragged into the shallow trench and given first-aid. Private Wheeler and Lieutenant Tilden were in serious condition and volunteers rushed them on makeshift stretchers through the hot shell fire to the dressing station. When they got there, Lieutenant Tilden absolutely refused to let the Medics dress his wounds until they had cared for Wheeler, who was losing blood in profusion and weakening rapidly.

Meanwhile the withdrawal from the fatal spot had been successfully completed without further losses. We reorganized our gun squads with what men remained and established machine gun outposts for the protection of the main body of infantry, now dug in among the trees of the old orchard on the rear side of the ridge.

It was now 3:00 P. M. and it was decided that we should remain in our present positions until the morrow, when, with the aid of artillery, we could force the strong-point in the valley beyond.

It has not been mentioned in the foregoing account that the French tanks we had expected in the morning finally arrived just as the infantry was escaping from the valley and our machine-guns were being dismounted. Five of them appeared on the flank of our position and started down into the valley. They helped us only by drawing a portion of the enemy fire, and did not get far. All were put out of action, by what were apparently Minnie Wurfers, three minutes after they appeared lumbering within range.

During the night, things were comparatively quiet, and some of us succeeded in snatching a bit of sleep at odd moments. Rain fell, at various intervals, in little showers twenty or thirty minutes in duration. The earth was already oozing water from the rainy weather of the past few weeks, and the present rain softened the surface into a sticky mud. We were restless, and a bit nervous. Between snoozes we paced the hillside and gazed anxiously at the sky for signs of dawn. In spite of the conditions, however, it will be remembered that we still had the spirit to laugh and joke.

Shortly after midnight a water-wagon full of coffee arrived in the valley behind us. We went back in detachments to get the precious liquid. While we were slightly disappointed because it was only lukewarm, we nevertheless considered it a great treat. We had subsisted on bully and water for forty-eight hours.

At last the dawn of the twenty-eighth came; misty, chill, and wet. Our company was shifted to reserve and a company from the machine-gun battalion took our places in support of a fresh battalion of infantry.

The attacking wave went over, accompanied by a light barrage, and we followed a few hundred yards behind. The strong-point in the valley had been evacuated by the enemy during the night and did not now hold us up. The first wave crossed it. We reserves, however, had no sooner started than the table-land ahead was drenched with shellfire. Apparently it was the intention of the Germans to isolate the first wave and support-line from the main body, and then trap them at some point ahead. Twice we were forced back by the intensity of their fire, but the third attempt succeeded. We spread out across the field and won our way through by short spurts, hugging the earth and taking a chance on escaping direct hits whenever the shells fell thickly.

Soon we were in sight of the village of Ivoir. It had been rumored that Montfaucon had fallen before the onslaught of our division right wing the day before. Now we determined that all hell itself shouldn't keep us out of Ivoir. We saw the first wave surge into the little village and the sounds of pitched battle came from the streets. As reserves we were denied the opportunity to get into the fray, so we had to be content with watching it.

Ivoiray lay in a sort of basin formed by the converging of several valleys. We lay on the heights slightly southeast of it. A narrow white road ran parallel with our positions and dipped down the valley into the village. It had been raining, but now the sun shone fitfully and the water on the grass and trees glistened. The white-washed stone houses gleamed brightly against a back-ground of dense woods. A few shrapnel shells burst in puffs of white smoke which floated lazily in the air, but so close were the combatants in the village that neither side dared shell it for fear of injuring their own men. It began to rain again, and the sky turned leaden gray.

Suddenly we saw the khaki-line burst from the other side of the town and plunge into the dense woods. Ivoiray was taken.

We could hear the rattle of machine guns and rifles and see the shrapnel puffs among the trees. More resistance; and evidently it was stiff.

Our line moved forward a hundred yards or so to the hillside on the right of Ivoiray. Here we lay for two hours, as the battle for the woods went on. Meanwhile, we were being shelled and sprayed with shrapnel, but we hung on, taking cover in the shell-holes and along the low embankment of a narrow gauge railroad. Part of our company lay in the ditches along the Ivoiray Road. Air battles went on unceasingly and we watched the war overhead with interest, except when the "Hiss-s-s-s——Bang!" of H. E.'s diverted our attention to our own safety.

During quiet intervals we managed to eat our noon mess; a load of bully, hardtack, and syrup had been brought up in spite of the dangerous shellfire, and two carts of coffee had been sneaked into the valley. We risked terrible destruction by massing repeatedly around these carts to get the coveted stuff. Our officers ordered us to disperse time and again, but we paid little heed. Happily no harm came of the matter, but much might have happened. We record this petty insubordination merely to illustrate the risks men will take when their stomachs prompt them.

Shortly after noon, we again picked up our equipment and moved forward. The shelling at once tripled its intensity. Without a doubt we were under observation by some means unknown to us. By an almost interminable series of spurts, we gained our immediate objective, a bare hillside on the right of the woods beyond Ivoiray. Again we laid down our guns and took cover.

The constant harassing we were undergoing began to tell on our nerves, which had been in a state of tension for so long that they began to frazzle. The steady rain increased the irritation we felt. We could not fight shell-fire; just had to take our medicine and hang on. The exhaustion of our reserves of strength by the weight

of our equipment also was apparent. It requires every ounce of guts a man possesses to keep pace with the infantry when he is loaded down with fifty pounds extra weight.

Afternoon wore on into evening, and evening into night. The driving rain continued with unabated energy, and we felt the chill entering the very marrow of our bones. Borrowing entrenching tools from nearby infantrymen, many of us scooped out holes in the hillside and tried to shelter ourselves with overcoats and slickers; others dug in along the ditch of the road at the base of the hill. There was no escape from the elements in these rude devices. The water seeped in through the sides or trickled over the edges of our fox-holes and formed pools and puddles in the bottoms. However, our exhaustion was so complete that we paid no heed, and lying in the water, fell asleep. Occasionally we were awakened by the crashing explosion of "a close one." Rheumatic pains racked our joints and disturbed our slumber.

We were very fortunate that night, in that no man of our company was killed or wounded; not a few of the doughboys, dug-in on our flanks, were blasted from their little shelters by chance direct hits.

Many men found slight cover in the half demolished buildings of Ivory. An advanced dressing station had been set up in one of the old houses and we clustered there just for the comfort the dim candlelight gave us. The windows of course had been carefully covered with old blankets or there could have been no light at all permitted. Wounded men were being brought in regularly; found, God knows where, out in the black, wild night. Some of them, poor lads, were in terrible agony, and what with the already overwrought state of our nerves, we could not stand to hear them or see them suffer. We dispersed and took shelter in dark corners of the other houses.

All night long the shells crashed down among the buildings. The enemy doubtless figured that we would congregate there on such a night. Many men paid with life and limb for the modicum of comfort the place offered.

Gray dawn, accompanied by the never-ceasing rain, heralded the approach of day; the fourth day of the drive, Sunday, the twenty-ninth. We grouped in twos and threes and shivered from exposure. Many were weak and on the verge of illness.

We saw Major Houts in conference with a superior officer, a colonel. The two were pacing back and forth along the hillside. We later learned that they were arguing heatedly over the question of whether or not we should advance. The colonel told Major Houts *that, despite repeated efforts, his troops had been unable to conquer the Ivory woods completely.* The place was literally impregnated

with mustard gas and swept continually with shellfire. It could not be taken, he stated, without great artillery preparation, and furthermore, he had authentic information that the Germans were about to make a heavy counter-attack. Major Houts replied that his men would attack and go through that woods; there would be no half-way measure,—they'd go through! The upshot of the matter was that the colonel ordered the major to fall back and prepare for a counter-attack, asserting that he would take full responsibility. Major Houts reluctantly obeyed.

The orders to retire came to Captain Wedow a few minutes later. It was nearly 10:00 o'clock. Shouldering our burdens we started down the valley in three single files. We had been ordered to follow the base of the ridge for a few hundred yards and then cut back across the road and over the rear hill. This valley and hill had been constantly under fire during the morning. We entered upon the perilous ground.

Only a bare hundred yards had been covered when the enemy suddenly poured in a terrific barrage of H. E., gas, and shrapnel upon us. With incredible swiftness it developed into the dreaded box-barrage, by means of which entire units have often been annihilated. We were trapped. There was but one thing to do; run the gantlet of fire. That mysterious direct observation which had impeded our movements the day before was again upon us. We learned later that an observation post had been in operation at Montfaucon; a German, concealed in a cellar, watched us by means of a periscope and telegraphed our movements to the enemy artillery. Although we could not fathom the mystery at the time, we were painfully aware that something was wrong. No matter which way we turned the shells followed.

Their gunners must have indeed been skilled men to have made so many accurate shots; we were split in three single files with fifty to a hundred yards separating each unit. One six-inch killed Norman MacLean, and wounded McKinley King, George Call, and Arthur Lego severely while they were seeking shelter for an instant in a shell-hole. Another six-inch killed Jack Buch. Then Hine, L. G. Smith, Dunn, McGinnis, Shiffman, and Carney were wounded. Carney was cut up badly and later died of his wounds. We left volunteers to take care of the wounded and carry them to the dressing station, and pressed on. Spreading out over a wide area, we ran the barrier of exploding shells and moved to shelter back over the hill. All of us who were left had miraculous escapes; though showered time and again with flying dirt and rock, and sprayed with shrapnel, we came through safely.

In the corner of an apple orchard we reorganized our depleted command, and took up our assigned positions in support of three batteries of artillery.

Our nerves were now in a state of collapse. Several men were slightly gassed and some were suffering from temporary shell-shock. The expected counter-attack failed to materialize, and it was asserted, even by the officers, that we must soon be relieved. Needless to say, we all prayed that it come quickly, but the weary hours passed on and there were no signs of it. We dug in along the roadside in preparation for the night. Meanwhile, the rain continued.

All night the artillery on the hillside crashed and roared as they harassed the enemy. We were so near the guns that the shock of their explosions rocked the very ground beneath us and seemed to nearly split our eardrums. These were what are known as sacrifice batteries, placed in emergency virtually on the front lines.

Monday was raw and cold. There had been no change in orders and we remained in support of the sacrifice-batteries. During the day, dozens of air-battles went on above us, and the roads that formed our lines of communication were shelled heavily. We spent the time improving our fox-holes, watching the squadrons of planes battling overhead, and observing the effect of the shelling.

The rain ceased for a while and our spirits rose a bit. Various means of passing the time developed. We bet everything from fabulous amounts of money to souvenir buttons on the likelihood of certain wagons,—seen now and then going or coming over the ridge behind us,—getting through safely or being blown “to flinders.” It is significant that no tobacco or cigarettes were gambled. Remnants of chewing tobacco and a few precious sacks of “Bull” were discovered and we enjoyed them as we never had before. To get all possible out of the limited amount on hand, the grains of tobacco which fell when a cigarette was rolled were caught in the hands or caps and put back into the sack and when the invaluable “pill” had been passed around and smoked down to the size of an ordinary butt, the butt was impaled on a sharpened match-stick and burned to the very end!

Night came again; still we hung on. Of relief there were still no signs. Information came that our division had more than attained its objective and that counter-attacks made by the enemy the night before had failed to budge our front line; Montfaucon, originally in the path of the division on our right, had been taken and held by an encircling movement of our right wing after the enemy had twice successfully ejected the other division from the stronghold. Our extremely rapid advance had put us at the point of a salient; we had taken our final objective, Cierges, and now had only to consolidate and hold the ground we had gained. This news of our success heartened us a great deal, and the now fitful showers of rain *passed unnoticed*, as did all other petty irritations which had *been undermining our spirits*.

At 1:00 o'clock the next morning we were relieved. Fresh troops filed past in the darkness as we formed up to move out. We hiked for almost three hours back over the hills, the sounds of battle growing faint in the distance. Finally we came to a valley in which was a group of five or six rolling kitchens. Hundreds of men and many horses, wagons, and carts were concentrated there, among them our machine gun train. Joyfully we laid our heavy guns and equipment on the carts and rushed to the kitchens for something to eat. Hot coffee and an endless supply of bread and syrup were waiting for us. The meal gave us new life. It was too cold to attempt to sleep so we stamped our feet and beat our arms to keep out the chill, and joked and chatted cheerfully until after daybreak.

It was about 9:00 A. M. when the company was formed and marched back to the crossroads in the forest. Here we rested for two hours and then started on the long rough march back to Recicourt.

As though it were rejoicing with us, the sun shone quite warmly and our spirits rose still higher. That night we pitched pup-tents with the rest of the regiment on the hills back of Recicourt. Here only the occasional faint booming of the big guns reached our ears. This was the peace and quiet we needed. Our work in the now famous Meuse-Argonne offensive was finished.

Stories of the Argonne

In the afternoon of the first day, having advanced two or three miles with nothing but artillery opposition, we suddenly ran into a machine gun barrage. We halted and mounted two guns, and proceeded to give them some of their own medicine. The nest which they occupied was too well protected, however, for us to penetrate, so a one-pounder was brought up. The lieutenant in charge called out the fire order, "Seven hundred—one shot!" The gunner fired, but the enemy machine guns still popped. "Nine hundred—one shot!" Another shot flew and tore up the brush in the vicinity of the enemy's supposed position. Still the machine gun bullets sang past us. "Twelve hundred—one shot!" The third shot hissed over and after the explosion their guns ceased firing. "Give 'em the whole damn box!" shouted the lieutenant. A moment later we pressed on. The first machine gun nest had been destroyed.

—SERGEANT BERNARD J. RONEY.

When the barrage that started the drive began at midnight September 25th, Mess Sergeant Byram, who is a veteran of the war with Spain, was sitting on the tongue of the rolling kitchen. He

listened attentively to the roar of the guns for over ten minutes. Suddenly he looked around, and remarked dryly:

"I've heard more shooting in the last ten minutes than I heard during the whole damn Spanish-American war!"

—PRIVATE J. H. SPEES.

NOTICE:—Lost in action in the Argonne Forest on or about the 28th day of September—one quill. Finder please return to Private Wesley J. Bigler.

When little L. G. Smith was wounded in the leg, and almost unable to walk, he protested against being sent to the hospital. When finally convinced that he must go back he absolutely refused to go on a stretcher, but hobbled back by himself so that the few stretchers available might be used for the others.

Bug Speary was rarin' to go on the morning of the second day. He picked up a Hun rifle and boo-coo ammunition, turned around, and cried, "Hey, Rulie, betcha I get a Jerry now!" But shortly after the advance began a machine gun bullet got him in the pistol-pocket district and he was out of luck for his Hun.

—BUG RUEL.

On the third day of the drive, while Bernwinkler and I were digging a fox-hole with a bayonet and a mess-kit lid, an American plane circled once or twice over the field we were in. At that moment a couple of Jerry cannon barked and a couple of shells whizzed over and landed about twenty feet from us. They were duds. Lieutenant Shultz came running back and asked if we saw where that message dropped! He thought the plane had dropped a message for us!

—MATT MANNING.

The most trying and tiresome seven hours I have ever put in were early in the morning of September 26th. That morning at 12:15 Lieutenant Merriman picked out Privates Butler, Lasher, Rood, Stewart, and myself, with Private Ed. Munson as guide, to carry coffee and slump to the trenches for our boys before they went over the top. It was the first time over the top in a big drive and it may be imagined how we felt. It worked on our nerves as well as muscles, carrying that mess, because it was, I really believe, about four miles one way.

One can of coffee and one of slump carried that distance without much relief blistered our shoulders after a time. The cans were

swung on long poles and the poles were rested on our shoulders. We simply had to get there before 5:00 A. M. so that the boys would have time to eat before dawn. It was very dark most of the way, as we had to go through a woods and follow a path that in lots of places was so slippery that we could hardly stand up. Sometimes we did slip and go down. We were told by our guide that it was only a mile, when we started. I saw afterward that he said that just to encourage us. The last half-mile was made in trench-mud almost up to our knees. The Captain met us with a detail to help out, and led us up this network of trenches to the company. We waited while they gobbled their mess and then, somewhat rested, started back again. It was daylight the most of the way back and the artillery barrage was hitting it up harder than ever. All the way through the woods many big guns were lined up, all lifting steel over into Jerry's lines. That was music to us, though it deafened us and shook the ground beneath our feet. Walking along amongst that shooting artillery was a strange sensation; a fellow half expected to get his hat or his head blown off.

When we finally got back we snatched a bit to eat and then hitched up the mules and started to follow up the company with ammunition.

—PVT. RAYMOND L. COVERT.

We all know how hungry a man gets on the battle-field, but if you want to know just how hungry a government mule gets, ask Private Shaps. Shaps placed his pack on a mule-leader cart as we were leaving the Argonne. The mule was tied to the cart, sans oats or hay, when we halted for the night. Next morning Shaps woke minus a shelter-half, raincoat, two clean suits of underwear, and German souvenirs too numerous to mention. The mule had eaten them in addition to the padding out of his harness and half a cart-shaft. Being a man of God, Shaps didn't swear, but the look he gave the mule showed more cuss-words than the whole mule-leading gang's vocabulary boasts.

On the second day of the drive, part of our company was trapped in an old artillery emplacement. Jerry was putting a machine gun barrage over this place so we had little chance of getting out. The infantry was dragging wounded into this shelter by the dozen, many of them being wounded themselves while getting their fallen comrades to a place of temporary safety. We helped them as much as possible. There were men there with wounds in the head, shoulders, and legs; an awful sight. One of our sergeants came crawling in with the report that German tanks were surrounding us. There were only forty of us. What chance did we have with tanks?

We just decided to fight until the last man was killed. We made preparations, and then, while we were waiting there with tense nerves, a runner came in with the glad news that the tanks were French!

—PVT. DONALD L. BAXTER.

Lieutenant Tilden was a charter member of the company. It was the morning of the twenty-seventh, just after we had fired our barrage and swept the valley clear of Huns, when Tillie got hit. Most of us had taken cover in a shallow trench nearby, when the enemy artillery started shelling us. Tilden saw something to do and paid no heed to the whiz-bangs. Next, I heard my name called and looked over the parapet to find Slim Walters, from Akron, trying to get the lieutenant into the trench. It was too much for one man so I assisted him. After that I dressed the lieutenant's leg and arm as best I could. My tin hat cut his upper lip when I ducked a close one. The shelling lasted until we had got him started to the rear. Tilden was game.

—SGT. HARRY D. CATER.

I would like to say a few words about the wonderful nerve which Lieutenant Tilden showed in the Argonne drive. With one arm broken and leg almost severed by shell fragments, he was dragged into the muddy trench with us. The first thing he said was, "I am not a very good warrior, I guess." He directed us in giving him first aid, telling the Red Cross man to lift his leg up as it bothered him! Then he asked for a cigarette and he smoked as they carried him away.

—PVT. HAROLD RAINES.

Jerry, Private Lewis Siedler's mule, deserves a wound stripe. One of the other mules mistook his tail for army-issue hay. Thus the "tail" ends.

Jimmy Wilson was wounded by a machine gun bullet while trying to get a message from the Second Platoon through a heavy machine gun barrage. Atta boy, Jim! Glad to see you're back again.

Sergeant Richner located a sniper hiding in a tree on the first morning out. He pointed him out to some riflemen and the sniper was "*Fineesh—Toot-sweet!*" Richner is sure some snipe-hunter!

Says Private Pearson, "Just imagine yourself with a pack on your back and carrying a machine gun tripod which weighs about fifty-six pounds through a swamp in mud over your shoe-tops. Well, that is what we had to do, and believe me it was Hell! But it had to be done; damn the Kaiser, anyhow!"

"Before we went over the top," says the well known aforesaid Private Pearson, "I sure did think of home and mother, and the girl I left behind me. And I wasn't the only one!"

Guess you're right, Rap!

At one time on the first day out the enemy snipers had been very busy picking off men on all sides. Suddenly two Dutchmen crashed through the bushes accompanied by a doughboy, who was encouraging them to move on by pricking them in the seat of the pants with his bayonet. He was stopped by the Major, who had an interpreter converse with them. They answered in monosyllables. Suddenly the machine gun bullets began to sing around us and we took cover in the shell-holes,—with the exception of Hans and Fritz. They were compelled to stand erect and ordered to talk fast and quick. They did! And every time one of them began to bend his knees to crouch, in fear of the bullets, the doughboy helped him up with the bayonet. The Major got his information and soon we knocked out the enemy machine gun nest.

—SGT. BERNARD J. RONEY.

Again Private Pearson comes to bat with this, "—and the machine gun bullets was just as thick as fleas on a dog's back!"

Lieutenant Fri is a gruesome guy! He lined up his platoon before they started for the front and asked them if they all had their dog-tags!

Never mind, Shaps, you weren't the only one that suffered loss on account of a mule. The company council book was eaten by a hungry mule at Recicourt, after we came out of the drive. And they talk about the digestive ability of an ostrich!

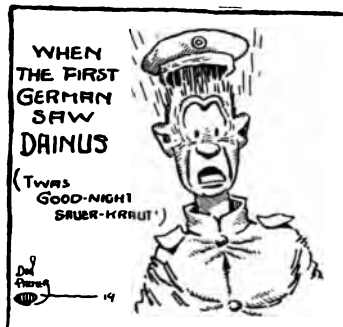
The last two men in the company to leave the Argonne were Coleman and Johnson. The Skipper detailed them to meet the train and inform Lieutenant Smith that the company had gone on to Recicourt. He also instructed them to go at once to Headquarters

Company with the information that we were ready to move out. They were gone on this errand five minutes, during which time Lieutenant Smith and his outfit slipped by the Crossroads. The two waited at the Crossroads for eighteen hours, cussing everything from the army to the Kaiser. Finally they gave it up as a bad job and found a stimulus to further cussing when they reached Recicourt and discovered how they had been fooled.

Perhaps only a soldier who has drunk his cup of blood and fire to the dregs knows that strange mingling of emotions packed into that little word "relieved."

—From The Great Amulet, by Maud Diver.

It was near the Crossroads that the following occurred. Colonel Stansbury was pacing up and down the road near his headquarters. A signal corps man was in the woods nearby searching for a break in the telephone line. He flashed his pocket light to inspect a certain wire.



"Put out that light!"

The light went out, but reappeared a moment later in another spot.

"Put out that light!"

Again it disappeared and then showed again.

"Put out that light, damn it! Do you hear me?"

The signal corps man thought he'd have a little fun.

"Why, Colonel, that ain't a

light—that's only the moon!"

"I don't give a damn what it is! Put it out!"

An idea of the stupendous troop movements necessary to prepare for a drive like the Meuse-Argonne may be gained from the fact that 800,000 men passed in and out of that portion of the front between the second and twenty-fifth of September, to say nothing of the vast volume of supplies necessary to maintain them. All troops were moved at night. Other traffic went on both day and night. Fifteen French divisions were relieved by twelve American divisions.

Sergeant Stimmel, Private Raines, Private Frank, and Private Bigler were gassed slightly.

From the Argonne to the Pannes Sector

October 3rd-October 8th

We remained encamped on the Recicourt hills for only thirty-six hours, during which time our extra equipment, which had been turned in at the dugouts, prior to our entrance into the drive, was returned to us. Unfortunately, a great deal of confusion attended the distribution of these blanket rolls, and many never reached their owners; as a result, such things as toilet articles, souvenirs, small valuables, clothing, and blankets were lost. A great pile of unclaimed property quickly accumulated which, it is sad to say, was ruthlessly looted by men who took advantage of the opportunity for gain and got away with the goods before the rightful owner came along. No great effort was made by those in authority to straighten the matter out. The unfortunates had to swallow the affair as an object lesson,—we had been ordered to leave such things as toilet kits and trinkets behind; in the next drive we would know better than to obey that order!

Because of the possibility of attack by roaming enemy planes, we moved to old French barracks in the nearby village of Brabant. The change wasn't altogether pleasing to us, for pup-tents were infinitely preferable to the uncomfortable laced-wire bunks and filthy barracks; besides, we objected on general principles to unnecessary movements, and the possibility of air-raids was certainly remote. It is true that we, ourselves, were as filthy as the old barracks,—as yet, we had had no opportunity to clean up; our clothing was tattered and dirty, our shoes stiff with water and mud, and our bodies covered with dried sweat and vermin,—but even filthy soldiers like a clean abode.

We were not in the barracks very long, and the little time of leisure was given up entirely to rest; we were "played out" in every sense of the phrase,—hardly a man had escaped the contraction of that disagreeable malady, trench rheumatism; every one of us had caught colds, and many whose stomachs had proved unequal to the strain were suffering with dysentery. However, above our multitudinous troubles, rose that spirit which had won fame for our division and earned us the coveted sobriquet "Spear-Heads" or shock troops; the spirit that laughs at any obstacle; the spirit of the true soldier; the spirit that wins battles.

Naturally, the question now uppermost in our minds was "Where do we go from here?" It was rumored that we were to rest five days and re-enter the fight, that we were going directly to a quiet sector, and that our destination was a division rest-camp. Wild conjectures that we were going either to Russia or into a coming great offensive in the Alps passed among us.

At about 3:00 P. M., October 3rd, we received orders to prepare at once to move out on trucks. One rumor died a sudden death; we were not going back into the Argonne. With alacrity we rolled packs and cleaned up our quarters. A considerable amount of bully-beef and French army hard-tack was on hand at the kitchen and we were invited to help ourselves. Very little bully was taken, but we filled our pockets with the hard-tack which we liked exceedingly well, as it gave us something to gnaw at on hikes or long journeys. It is surprising how a nibble of hard-tack, now and then, will lighten the longest march or weary ride.

We marched to the trucks, which lay in a long train on the road a kilometer distant, stopping at an emergency ration dump long enough to pick up our traveling rations. It was now about 4:00 o'clock and becoming dusky; night came before we had been on our way half an hour. Of this, our second truck-trip, nothing much can be said which would not be repetition; we were so very much worn out that we paid little heed to passing scenery or our direction. We traveled at great speed throughout the night and were still rumbling along at daybreak. When we came to Bar-le-Duc it became evident that we had been going south from Recicourt. At Bar-le-Duc we turned east, and shortly thereafter, at about 8:00 A. M., halted and debouched into a woods near the town of Void.

We were told that we might take it easy and get all the rest we could as we were to remain in the woods all day. Our kitchen had been loaded on one of the trucks, but inquiry disclosed the fact that the truck which bore it had broken down during the night, and had been left behind. We were out of luck and had to make the best of it.

Building brushwood fires, we cooked the remainder of our travel rations. Those who were so lucky as to have coffee and sugar in their condiment-cans made coffee and soaked the salvaged French hardtack in it. This business of cooking our own meals and scraping up all manner of food from the countryside was becoming a matter of course.

The weather was damp and chilly, with occasional drizzles of rain. We felt rather dispirited and either hugged the little brushwood fires, conversing in short sentences and monosyllables, or rolled ourselves in overcoats and slickers and slept the rest of the day.

When darkness came we again took the road,—on foot. Our march was fifteen kilometers in length, beginning at Void and ending at Vignot, a small town one kilometer from Commercy. We were *now in the vicinity of Toul*, a portion of France which is particularly

mountainous. In our condition, such a march under full pack was an exquisite torture. To cap the climax, we had the devil's own time getting billets. It was very late, nearly midnight, and no doubt the inhabitants whom we aroused were peeved when their rest was disturbed. Anyhow, they were snappish, discourteous, and extremely slow in opening the doors to their barns and stables. One old woman, in particular, argued and haggled stubbornly over the number of men she was to have for her billet. There were only ten men of the company left unbilleted and she demanded forty, refusing entrance to a lesser number. We finally wheedled her into complying with our wishes by a fictitious promise to bring thirty more men on the morrow, and at last got under cover. Here let us insert an extract from the personal diary of one of the men who was in the aforementioned billet: "—then there was a damned old sheep below us that kept us awake half the night with its infernal Baa! Baa!—What a life!"

Next day, being without our kitchen and without rations, we rushed to the stores of the town and bought such articles as canned peas, beans, tomatoes, peaches, jam, cheese, potted meat, and bouillon cubes. The cost of these things was enormous, but we had to eat, so we did not take account of that. When it is considered that a pint can of peas or beans costs seven francs,—about a dollar and a quarter,—it is easily understood why a soldier's francs do not go very far.

That night, to our surprise and indignation, we were ordered to roll packs and get ready to move on again. A number of the men were so sick and weak that they had to be left behind, with instructions to go to the infirmary. The most pious of us cursed the army fluently during that march. It was another gruelling fifteen kilometers, which ended at the village of Juoy, where we billeted.

When we roused ourselves the next morning we found that there was still no sign of our kitchen, consequently we got no breakfast. At noon we received some vile coffee and slum which some of the cooks had managed to prepare for us in a pair of rusty old kettles. We did not kick, however, for we knew that they were doing their level best and were handicapped by lack of rations.

Again that night we hit the road. Would it never end? We had hiked only two kilometers when a motorcycle messenger overtook us, and we at once turned back and re-entered Juoy. Everyone was bewildered and angry. "What in Hell's name are they going to do! Hike us all over France?" asked one disgruntled sergeant. It was evident that we were the victims of an error of some sort, made by those "higher up." At Juoy we found things in an uproar. We had no orders and were instructed to fall out and remain near at hand. Upon mingling with other companies we received the

startling information that the Central Powers were asking for an armistice and that it was to be granted. The news had been posted upon the bulletin board at regimental headquarters. It was rumored that all troop movements would cease, and therefore we had been called back. It sounded good, seemed authentic, and we wanted to believe it was true.

Coming as we had, directly from the great drive, the news caused that indefinable clutching of the heart-strings that is so sweet and yet so painful. Could it really be true? We permitted ourselves to be swayed, and peeped through the curtain we had deliberately hung between us and the future. Heretofore we had schooled ourselves to shut from our minds all thoughts and plans for "after the war." The prospect revealed to us, assuming that the great news was true, set our brains reeling with joy. Our hearts throbbed against our breasts and our throats felt full with the delirium of unexpected happiness. But reason again asserted itself and we gradually cooled off and began to consider the matter with an undercurrent of suspicion. Suddenly orders came to fall in, and soon we were marching in the opposite direction out of Juoy. Harsh laughter echoed up and down the ranks and then, relapsing into numb silence, we plodded wearily onward.

Twelve kilometers in addition to the other four which we had hiked uselessly earlier in the evening, were more than enough to break our powers of endurance. Sergeant White, Sergeant Freiter, Private Donahue, and Private Manning felt so sick and weak that they had to be left behind. Sergeant White, by the way, never returned to the company. We have heard that he attached himself to another outfit, in what division, we do not know. That sure sign of sapped resources, the stretching of the company to twice its ordinary length, had appeared. We reached our destination, the town of Boucq, just in time to prevent the loss of more men. We were supposed to meet two companies of the machine gun battalion that night and leave on the tram railroad which led out of the place. Trouble seemed to be coming in bunches; the two companies failed to show up.

After waiting in the darkness for several hours, our officers, Captain Wedow and Lieutenant Merriman being the only ones with us, hunted around town until they found shelter for us from the rain and cold. The strain of the past two weeks was terrible. Due to a mixup of some sort the Skipper and Merry were absolutely at sea, and with a bunch of men on their hands who were foot-sore, underfed, in low spirits, and on the verge of serious illness. The writer knows personally, as do several other men in the company, that the Captain and the Lieutenant took turns standing guard, *while awaiting the other companies*, so that every man could snatch

some sleep. Their self-imposed duty lasted until the next morning. Then coffee was procured from some unknown source and Humpy Turner and a few others made a bucketful of good hot coffee.

Meanwhile the famished company fell upon the vineyards round about and gorged themselves with half-ripe grapes. It was a rotten state of affairs to be sure. Some relief from our filthy condition was unexpectedly given us when it was found that there was a bath house in the town. We collected wood and had a hot bath in the afternoon; the first hot bath since that at Indian Village, in Alsace-Lorraine, two months before.

That night (it was now October 7th) the other companies arrived and we all boarded the waiting tram-train. It was raining steadily and we were thoroughly soaked by the time our four hour ride on these little flat cars had come to an end. We detrained at Essey, a town captured from the enemy in the St. Mihiel Drive, and consequently in bad shape. This town lay only four or five kilometers from the front and was under shell-fire at times.

There were no civilians in Essey with the exception of two Salvation Army girls who operated a canteen. It was one of the best canteens we have ever struck; they were extremely accommodating and good to us, and had a large supply of real good old American hard candy on sale at a very low price. Few of us will forget those delicious clove-drops, "Iceland Moss" drops, lemon drops, lime drops, and striped peppermint sticks! It reminded a fellow of Christmas at home.

We were billeted in an abandoned dwelling on the outskirts of the town, the rear end of which had been shattered by shellfire. During the following day we rested and cooked what rations we could secure. We could hear the occasional rumble of artillery and the explosion of shells along the front. Just before nightfall we were suddenly aroused by the shrill whine of a big shell. It landed somewhere in the town, several more following shortly afterward. The shelling ceased as suddenly as it began, but this served to remind us that we were again up against Jerry.

After darkness had come, we were taken in trucks to the vicinity of Bouillonville, about four kilometers distant, where our positions lay. We were to be in reserve. It was not raining, but the night was black and the clouds hung low, a condition much in our favor. Upon leaving the trucks we marched over a muddy by-road down into a deep-cut gulley or gulch. Near the end of this narrow defile we came to a row of wooden shacks which had been built by the Germans and were now occupied by our troops. Headquarters Platoon was dropped off to billet in one of them; the rest of the

company went on to the end of the gulley, which opened into a broad, deep valley. After descending a flight of rude stairs they reached their billets, similar little shacks built on the hillside.

We found these little buildings to be very comfortable indeed. Jerry had left stoves and all behind, and the troops we relieved had in most cases kept their fires going until we arrived. To have at last reached a haven of real rest in comfortable bunks seemed too good to be true.

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October 8th-October 16th

The Pannes Sector, as it is officially named, is better known to us and the public as the St. Mihiel Sector. In the famous St. Mihiel Drive, which began September 12th, the Americans drove the Germans with incredible swiftness out of the salient that had been a thorn in the side of the Allies for a long time. We were now in the portion of that sector known as the Thiaccourt Front. Our front line lay just a couple of kilos beyond that town, where, content with having gained their objectives, the straightening of the line necessary to the success of the gigantic plans of General Foch, our troops had dug in and consolidated the ground won.

During the eight days we were in this sector those troops whose lot it was to occupy the first line were engaged in some of the hottest trench warfare of the whole war. We lost an astounding number of men, wounded by shrapnel and victims of poisonous gas. The enemy sprayed the lines continually with shrapnel, high explosives and gas shells. Trench raids and skirmishes between patrols were constantly going on at night. The division,—sent here for a short rest,—found itself up against fighting fully as harrowing and active as that of the Argonne, but of a different brand. We acquitted ourselves with highest honors, in spite of the fact that we were in terrible condition after our experience as shock troops in that great drive.

Our company was in the reserve line near Bouillonville, a town close to Thiaccourt, and so we were able to get some sort of rest. We were sorely in need of it. On the first day in the sector we had to cook our own individual meals, as we had been doing for the past week.

On the second day a kitchen was secured, and once more we began to get good meals. The effect of this bit of rest and good food was wonderful. We “perked up” and soon were in good spirits and good condition again. It was our good fortune that it was not our turn to do a hitch in the front line. Our “rest” was indeed appreciated, although it was not of the rest-camp type; free from the duties and far from the battle lines.

We were treated to a bar of chocolate, a package of cookies, and cigarettes, on October 10th; a stunt which put us in prime good humor and made us appreciate the fact that our officers were thinking of our welfare.

Private Ray Johnson had been warned by Lieutenant Merri-
man that he was mentioning names of towns too freely in his letters
of late, and that in censoring them the lieutenant had nearly gotten
a glass arm. A few days after we arrived in the St. Mihiel Sector,
Johnson brought in several letters written by Coleman and himself.
The Lieutenant was in a hurry.

"Johnson," he said, "is there anything in your letters here that
oughtn't to be in them?"

"No, sir," replied Johnson.

"Is there anything in Coleman's?"

"I don't know, Lieutenant. I can't vouch for Coleman."

He sealed the letters and affixed his signature, taking a chance.
When Johnson got back to his billet and questioned Coleman con-
cerning the matter, his buddy confessed that he had given the names
of several towns in those letters, just so they would be struck out
in censoring, and thus excite curiosity at home.

Well, what's the diff? The war's over now!

According to Beardsley, Private Lynn Rood holds the distinc-
tive record of being the only man in the A. E. F. who has ever suc-
ceeded in foundering himself on army rations. * On the St. Mihiel
Sector he threw up four pairs of old socks.

As you know, our Skipper is a mounted man. At Bru his
Uncle Sammy issued him a fine horse, somewhat undersized, but
otherwise a beauty. At first the Skipper was simply infatuated with
the animal. The Old Boy did present a snappy appearance as he
dashed by his less fortunate comrades.

Time went on until we landed in the Argonne. Here the noble
steed began to wax lean and weak owing to lack of feed and over-
work. Then, having traveled from the Argonne to the St. Mihiel
Sector almost without oats, the Old War Horse was just about
"finis." You could hang your hat on his hip-bones, the hay stuck
right out through his ribs, his head and neck looked like grand-dad's
salt gourd, and his hair stood on end like an army issue mule-brush.
In other words, he was a "Darb."

While on this sector it was necessary for the Skipper to report to Brigade Headquarters near Essey, a distance of about one kilometer. He ordered the horse saddled. Soon all was ready and the Skipper mounted and started on his way. He rode just over the first knoll where he thought he would be well out of sight. Two buck-privates happened to be loafing in the foliage nearby. The Skipper dismounted, admired his own soldierly appearance, and then surveyed the poor ungainly horse. The Skipper is no expert judge of horses, but he realized the animal was slightly "off," so to speak. One of the buck privates heard him mutter, "I'll be cussed if I let my superiors see me on that outfit!"

He tied his war-horse to a telegraph pole and walked to his destination. On his return he mounted and rode into quarters, but made no remark. He did not know anyone had seen him. A few days later the old steed fell victim to Two Gun Slim Sylvia's automatic. Ever after, in France and Belgium, the Skipper hiked.

—PVT. C. G. GREENLEAF.

The new men from the 86th Division came to us at the Gully. Remember how sorry we felt for the poor dudes?

Bleeding France bled us of all our francs at Vignot!

A few of us suffered from stomach-ache after filling up on grapes at Boucq.

Remember that rush of recurring feelings which came over you when that first long range shell burst in Essey?

Homer Price and Johnson accompanied the Skipper on a trip to Eauvezin, a town about four kilometers from Essey. From Eauvezin they were sent on alone to find the First Battalion and get information regarding our lost train and kitchen and the possibility of securing rations for the company. This incident is mentioned merely to call attention to the fact that we had it pretty soft in our snug little huts in the Gully. The First Battalion men were in pup-tents and wet dugouts in a woods accessible only by a terribly muddy road. Conditions were almost as bad as on that never-to-be-forgotten night in the Argonne when we lay in the rain and mud on the shell-swept hills near Ivoir. We didn't always get the dirty end of the stick, you see.

We drew clean underwear and socks at the Gully. The underwear, you remember, was that known as "Cooties' Paradise." We had to use our extra shoelaces to tie it on and there was so much "slack" in the legs and seat that it gave a fellow a queer feeling.

Old "Uncle Tom," whose real name we do not know, but who is a "Y" man who won a lasting place in our hearts, opened up a canteen in the Gully for the special benefit of our company and the 136th Machine Gun Battalion. It so happens that few of us had come in contact with him before, but he is well known to other outfits of the division. He was on the job most of the time in the Baccarat Sector, and it was there that the boys learned to regard him as a friend and a man. Uncle Tom was always jovial and kind, and always "doing things," but with a modest and self-effacing way about him. Many a man has gone to Uncle Tom's canteen when he was broke and received tobacco, cakes, and cigarettes with the assurance that he need not worry about it. "Pay me when you can," said Uncle Tom.

We saw him for the last time at the Gully, and by way of a farewell to us—he was going back to the States—he brought a huge supply of cookies, jam, milk, tobacco, chocolate and cigarettes, and sold each man all he wanted. We had just been paid, and for once we got our fill.

Our hats are off to you, also, Uncle Tom!

Finally the Company received the Christmas Package Coupons we had heard so much about on Tuesday, October 15th. They were issued that day. Considering the slowness of the A. E. F. outgoing mail, it scarcely seemed worth while to send them home. According to the instructions, they had to be in the hands of our folks and the packages mailed by November 20th.

The roads between Bouillonville and Thiaccourt were harassed by shell fire. Coleman and Johnson, runners to Regimental Headquarters, got lots of additional practice in shell-dodging on their numerous trips back and forth.

The Red Cross operated a station in Bouillonville, which was open to runners at all hours of the night. They had "boo-coo" hot cocoa on tap and gave a man all he wanted; a canteen full to carry away with him, too, if he cared to take it. The station also *distributed newspapers and magazines* to the men and took care of sick and wounded.

The Colonel ordered the kitchens nearer the front line, so that the boys could have hot food in the trenches, and then raised Cain because the smoke drew shell-fire.

Regimental Headquarters was in a densely wooded valley beyond Thiaccourt. The place was shelled constantly. One big fellow lit on a shanty on the hillside, killing five runners and wounding three others seriously.

We heard lots of peace rumors while we were in the Gully, but we had been cured of being credulous and jumping to conclusions by the fiasco at Juoy.

From the Gully to Blenod-Les-Toul

October 16th-October 17th

Quite naturally, as we were moving, it rained. Leaving our cozy billets at 11:30 p. m., Wednesday, October 16th, we hiked the muddy one kilometer to the loading point on the high road between Bouillonville and Essey. We were going on another truck trip.

When we arrived on the scene we took our places in a rain-soaked field along with the hundreds of other men gathered there. The truck train was late. "Just our luck!" we grumbled. We stood around in the rain and cold for three and a half hours before it did come. Then, after considerable confusion—each captain tried to get his men under cover first, it appeared—we were finally jammed into the trucks. Ordinary truck capacity is sixteen men; many of these trucks were packed "to the scuppers" with twenty-two, twenty-four, and even as high as twenty-six men—nor were any extra trucks supplied for officers; at least we know that the Skipper, Lieutenant Merriman, and Lieutenant Shultz were packed into one truck along with the rest of the men.

The whole trip was an affair miserable enough, and few incidents worth mentioning occurred. We just philosophically endured the discomfort, or passed the time with jokes and exaggerated grumbling—that privilege of the soldier—and, of course, the good old songs that were ever on our lips at such times. At 9 A. M. the next day we de-bussed at the town of Foug, having passed through Toul shortly before.

There ensued a wait of about half an hour and then we formed up and started to hike. Now, it must be explained that, in spite of our week of comparative ease and comfort in the Gully, we were by no means fully recuperated from the previous weeks of hard work.

The infantry, who had been on the front line at St. Mihiel, were worse off than we were. Our real need was a rest in a division rest camp. When a man has given all but the last ounce of his strength; all but that last shred of endurance required to keep him on his feet and enable him to stagger, he has a tough time regaining his former ability to withstand the exhaustive effects of hiking and the attendant difficulties of active service—and our service had surely been constantly active since we had first entered the lines, as the reader will easily understand. In view of the above stated conditions, it is no wonder that the hike upon which we were entering reduced itself to a straggle before it was over.

From Foug we doubled back towards Toul, but by other roads. We did not know why we had been taken beyond our final destination and then forced to hike back—that was just another illustration of the incomprehensible methods of the army, we concluded, and seized upon it as a good subject to grouch about. A good soldier, you will find, invariably growls and grumbles about minor hardships, but put him in a battle and he never chirps.

The hills around Toul are one vast vineyard of the white and blue grape. Hundreds of peasants were at work gathering in the crops and loading the funny tub wagons to the brim with the luscious fruit. The pickers filled the long deep wicker or wooden baskets, slung them on their backs as we sling our packs, and carried them to these strange vehicles, which had three cumbersome wheels, two in back and one in front, and a huge, deep, wooden tub set upon their frames. The hills and valleys were a riot of colors—the green, yellow, blue, red and brown of the vineyards glowing in the bright sunlight, but softened by the deep mauve of the brush and dark green of the fir woods which crowned the heights.

Before our exhaustion began to show itself we found these scenes very interesting. During the first rest periods we partially satisfied the demands of our stomachs with grapes and turnips, but after the first ten "kilos" of hiking we were too much knocked out to bother. It was a case of flopping to the ground the instant the command, "Fall out to the right!" was given. It is harrowing enough to have to plug along under full pack for fifty minutes at a time when your knees begin to cave twenty minutes after you start, but combine that with a pace entirely too fast and lack of certain knowledge of destination and you have "Hell repeated." It is doubly aggravating to be told that the march is to be six or eight kilometers and then have it stretched to ten, then twelve, and then fifteen. Hope rises high as each town is entered and then dies down and flickers out as it becomes evident that "this ain't the town."

During the last five kilometers the men began falling out of ranks by the dozen; to straggle in hours later by twos and threes as their strength permitted. Due, possibly, to our bit of rest at the Gully, our company marched into Blenod-les-Toul intact.

After reaching billets and ridding ourselves of our obnoxious loads, we rushed to the stores of the town in a mad race to secure eggs, meat, cheese, jam, bread—any kind of food that could be procured. The flood passed in a whirl of feverish buying, and then, having stripped the shopkeepers of the bulk of their stock, we retired to back alleys and cooked our meals in our mess pans. Our kitchen, you see, was A W O L again!

Blenod-Les-Toul

October 17th-October 19th

Our sojourn at this village was very short. We were there only for the time required to assemble the division and secure transportation for the big move which was known to be coming. We knew that five days' "travel rations" were being drawn, but we did not know where we were going. The future was veiled by the strictest secrecy. Of course, there were the usual rumors, but none of them could be given a plausible foundation—Russia, Italy, Rest Camp, Alsace-Lorraine, all came to life again. Another rumor, flouted as being absolutely foolish, was that we were going to Belgium.

The town of Blenod-les-Toul contained no unusual points of interest, nor was it any different than the other small communities we had been in. We were billeted in the usual manner. We remember the town as being a pleasant place, perhaps because we were not there long enough to tire of it. Our kitchen did not show up, so we were issued flour, bacon, steak, onions, sugar, salt, coffee, and "grease" for frying. Thus, most of our time was occupied with cooking individual means in our mess pans.

Sergeant Jack Stimmel, gassed in the Argonne, returned to us at Blenod-les-Toul. Most of his time, he told us, had been spent in gadding about the country on a private sight-seeing tour.

Speaking of the recent bid of the Huns for peace brings to mind James Russell Lowell in his "Bigelow Papers":

"Better that all our ships an' all their crews
Should sink to rot in ocean's dreamless ooze,

Each torn flag wavin' challenge ez it went,
An' each dumb gun a brave man's monument,
Than seek sech peace ez only cowards crave;
Give me the peace of dead men or of brave!"

That's right, James!

Flapjacks leaped to popularity in the alleys of Blenod-les-Toul. Hamer Farrell was Chief Mixer of the Dough. Oh, boy! weren't they the real article? Our cooks would swell up and burst with pride if they ever handed us flapjacks like those!

The Skipper got in Dutch with his wife. Somebody wrote home, and his girl told another dame, who knew Mrs. Wedow, all about a certain incident. When Captain Wedow read his wife's letter a cold sweat broke out upon his forehead. It ran, in substance, something like this: ". . . and now I hear that you have been riding over the roads of France in an automobile seated in a certain person's lap. Will you kindly explain such scandalous actions?"

The Skipper was tearing his hair, so to speak, when he came to this postscript: "That 'certain person' was Private Ray Johnson." (The Captain rode from the Gully to Foug seated on that private's angular prayer bones, you see!)

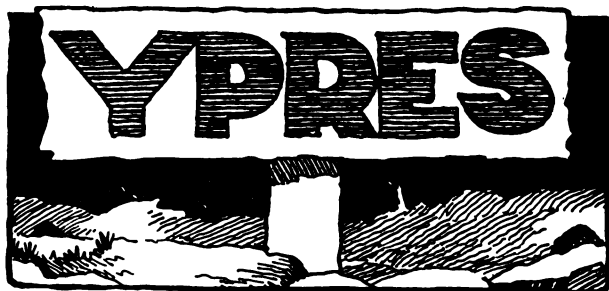


Leaving Blenod-les-Toul at 4:30 P. M. we hiked ten kilometers to the rail head at Dongermain. As we loaded into the freight cars it began to rain. Why not? We were moving!

We will pass up this opportunity to discourse again on the subject of French troop trains; suffice it to say, we had as rotten a time as usual. Our route took us through Troyes, Nangis, and the outskirts of Paris that night. That was as near as most of us ever got to that famous city, the goal of our hopes, when we came to France; all we saw were rail lights and a broad expanse of shiny wet tracks. During the night we had indulged in wild dreams of a Rest Camp, but when we turned northwest from Paris that air castle was shattered. We were headed for Belgium!

At about 1 p. m. the following day we hit the seacoast near Boulogne, passing within sight of that port. Soon we began to see the old familiar barbed wire entanglements and trench systems—reserve lines of resistance. It was 7 o'clock, misty twilight, when we detrained in the most desolate spot we had ever yet seen. We could not see much, it is true, in the failing light, but we saw just enough to cause our hearts to sink in despair. Everywhere—gray mud, debris, wire, old trenches, piles of shattered equipment, and a road teeming with men and vehicles.

There was no confusion in the detraining and we quickly slung our packs and started to march out the road. We went only a few hundred yards and then turned into a side road, where we halted. There followed a wait of ten or fifteen minutes while billets were being sought amongst the dozens of dugouts, which, according to information, abounded in the vicinity. Pup tents were considered, and then abandoned, because of the irregularities in the land due to old shellfire. Sufficient dugouts were found after a careful search and we distributed ourselves in them by twos, threes and fours until all of us were under cover.



When we crawled into our little dug-outs the night before we were tired and depressed by the atmosphere of desolation that was so apparent in this land. The dug-outs, we found to our sorrow, were infested with trench rats and fleas, and were exceedingly damp and ill smelling. The rats awakened us frequently by scurrying over our bodies or by the racket they made trying to get at our reserve rations. The fleas bit us until some of the fellows were well nigh distracted. Such conditions did not tend to improve our tempers, and when, in the morning, we emerged from our holes in the earth, we were very much cast down by the prospect that greeted us.

The land, before the war, must have been flat or gently rolling, for a broad view could easily be had from any of the many little knolls. From such a vantage point all that could be seen was a sea of grass, sprinkled with old watery shell holes and dotted with the low humped roofs of hundreds of little dug-outs. Old barbed wire lay in rusted tangles, tin cans abounded as in a city dump, frayed harness, splintered boards, twisted iron bars, and little piles of battered shell cases were scattered far and wide. In the distance a string of dinky freight cars indicated the railroad, and on our right the passing trucks showed the roadway. "What place can this be?" we wondered.

We were not long finding out. At about 9 o'clock, after a considerable time spent in waiting on the roadside for Headquarters Company, we started to hike. According to our officers, the hike was to last all day and possibly into the night and would be about twenty-five kilometers in length. We had not progressed over a *hundred yards* when we saw a small sign at a crossroads—"YPRES."

We were now seeing what all the world has read about and shuddered over; a city razed from the face of the earth, the monument of complete, utter, irreclaimable ruin to the spirit of the Hun; the place where Britain had hung on for four long years of misery, her men giving their lives in countless thousands and suffering unspeakable tortures that the bulldog grip might never loosen; the stronghold that had saved the last remnant of King Albert's brave kingdom, enabling his little army, in the last months of the war, to begin the turning movement that freed the sea coast cities of Bruges and Zeebrugge and helped roll the Huns back into Germany. This was Ypres and The Salient; the burial ground of the famous Canadian "Princess Pat" Regiment, and the scene of that first gas attack which so dumfounded and sickened the world.

No writer has exaggerated in his description of this famous place. To exaggerate is an impossibility, for no adequate words exist which could possibly convey a picture of such a ravaged land. We relapsed into stunned silence as the line of march opened new vistas of the vast waste, or, vainly attempting to throw off the depressing atmosphere that pervaded us, chattered garrulously to one another.

The road we followed was slimy with mud—Flanders mud. It wound tortuously between single rows of dead, shell-splintered poplars which had been stripped of their branches and cut off with surprising regularity at an average height of eight or ten feet, leaving only the stumps, some of which were sprouting anew since the tide of battle had been rolled back.

On each side the terrain was pock-marked with countless shell-holes; shell-holes, old and new, were crowded together until their very rims lapped or merged with others. Not a single square foot of land had escaped. All was one great convulsion. The old holes were grown over by long grasses and wild weeds; the newer ones looked like big scars in the yellow earth. Every one, old or new, was filled with water, due to the nearness of the country to sea level. This was one of the conditions that helped make more difficult the task of holding Ypres. Trenches had to be built up and bulwarked with sand bags instead of being dug in the ground, and even then they filled with water.

Barbed wire entanglements made a labyrinth on every side; tin cans and rubbish were strewn along the roadside; water-soaked piles of lumber lay rotting by the ditches. We saw the fluttering skeletons of aeroplanes; tangled masses of torn varnished cloth, splintered framework, and bent wheels from which the engines, instruments and other vital parts had been removed, leaving them like the flimsy, decayed carcasses of flies caught and gutted by spiders. Here and there we came upon the rusting remains of huge

tanks, which gave us visions of the whistling shells that had struck them, rending their very bowels, and killing or wounding their occupants. Like the planes, they had been stripped of all vital gear, shunted aside, and left to crumble away.

At all crossroads, as we entered the land which the Germans had abandoned in their retreat, we had to make detours over newly built wooden bridges. The crossings had been blown up by mines, and in their huge craters, filled deep with water, the bodies of dead horses had been thrown. Some of them were minus legs or heads, and strips of skin, partially torn from the carcasses, floated up toward the surface, the bare flesh, thus exposed, white from the effects of the water like the sickly color of a toad's belly.

Perched mockingly upon a pile of boards we saw a human skull with bits of hair still upon it. Perhaps some Tommy, with perverted humor, had set it there for the eyes of passing thousands to look upon. Perhaps a German had left it to mock spitefully the conquerors. It surely appeared to us a most eloquent symbol of the land we were passing through, whose very atmosphere was death.

Had we not been so much occupied with these thousand interesting, yet repulsive, sights, we might have found plenty of food for grumbling. The road was rocky, uneven, and a slough of mud, our packs were becoming exceedingly irksome, and we were ravenously hungry, having had for breakfast what littlehardtack and bully we had saved from the train. Around 1 o'clock in the afternoon we halted and had a slender meal. At 3 we pushed on.

The land now took on a subtle change; the shell-holes and other signs of devastation began to disappear. We saw a few open untouched fields, and many of the trees were quite whole. The road, too, was improving. Darkness settled gradually. We began to see the flare of fires against the sky and the beams of many tiny lights far ahead. Then, slowly taking shape in the gloom, we saw the dusky outlines of a house. The sight of a human habitation, although apparently untenanted, sent a revulsion of feeling over us that swept away the depression of dead Ypres. We became cheerful and light-hearted once more.

The house proved to be at a crossroads, and by the light from a truck standing nearby, we read several signs. The name of the crossroads was Sleyhaege; another sign pointed northeast to Hooglede; another gave direction to Roulers, slightly to the south of east; the fourth gave the road southwest to Ypres, over which we had come; the last pointed westward to Staden. Our column turned toward that town.

Along the road to Staden we passed other troops of our division who were encamped in pup tents in the fields. It was the fires

of their kitchens and the lights of candles in the tents which we had seen from the other road. The front, evidently, must be still far away. We went on for a distance of two kilometers and then pitched pup tents in a similar place, only five hundred yards from Staden. It was impossible to procure billets for us that night, but we did not mind sleeping in the open.

Staden

October 23d-October 26th

After having breakfasted on rice, syrup, bread and coffee at Headquarters Company kitchen—we were still without ours—we laid our equipment in the sun to dry, for the dew had been particularly heavy that night. Meanwhile we washed and shaved and cleaned up as much as possible. Just before noon we rolled our packs and moved to billets in the shattered town of Staden.

Staden, the first Belgian town we were in, was ruined almost beyond repair by shellfire and deliberate dynamiting. The great high-vaulted cathedral was a mere skeleton, the roofs and walls of all the large buildings had been caved in, and the smaller dwellings were similarly knocked to pieces. As there were only one or two places whose roofs had escaped, temporary roofs of old boards had been constructed to shelter troops, and to these places we went.

The most noticeable feature of Staden was the fact that all the buildings, even the very smallest, were built of red brick. In France we had become so used to seeing houses of stone that this seemed quite strange. The railroad at Staden was a mass of broken ties and twisted steel rails; the task of rebuilding it would be enormous. Strangely enough, the station had been spared by the retreating Huns. It was the only whole building in town.

We were at Staden only two and a half days. There was little else to do the first afternoon but clean up ourselves, our clothing and our equipment. Another kitchen was finally secured, but being on French rations, we fared rather poorly. Our lately acquired art of flapjack baking came to our assistance, and having secured flour, bacon fat, baking powder, sugar, coffee, and even canned milk, by hook or crook, it must be admitted, from a ration dump nearby, we managed to maintain tight belts.

Now that all this is gone and past, it must be said, in justice to the few men who might have been suspected of carrying on such nefarious practices, that the sin of "hooking" the ingredients for flapjacks was universal. Those who didn't hook the stuff helped eat the finished article, knowing full well whence it came. Nor were these nocturnal raids on ration dumps confined to our company

alone; this being borne out by the fact several fights with men of the other companies occurred, they also being bent on having flap-jacks, and none of us hesitating to quarrel over the spoils.

During the two full days we were in this town we worked on the gun carts, machine guns, tripods, and other equipment, cleaning, polishing and oiling them until they shone with proper brightness. Gas masks and helmets were carefully marked. We were given severe lectures on care and preservation of equipment and clothing. Being now isolated from the rest of the A. E. F. we could not procure supplies in plenty. We were about to go into another big drive, so we were told; another reason for bracing ourselves up. As is the habit of soldiers, we flouted the advice among ourselves, but nevertheless quietly went about doing the things we had been advised to do. That's human contrariness!

Lichtervelde

October 26th-October 28th

Leaving Staden at about 8:00 a. m. on Saturday, we hiked sixteen kilometers to Lichtervelde, passing through the small town of St. Joseph. The country through which we passed had been cleared of the Germans only a few days, and had been left in pretty good condition. Flanders was proving to be much different than we had expected. This was a land of small farms. Scattered far and wide were little, one-story, low, red-brick houses, thatched with grass or roofed with tile, and surrounded by barns and strawstacks. At this season of the year most of the land was devoted to turnips; indeed, the country was a vast, bright-green sea of turnip-tops. Everything impressed us as being well-ordered and scrupulously clean.

The civilians we saw were bright, jolly, and intelligent, and simply went wild over us. We were the first body of American troops in Flanders, and the first these people had ever seen. Many of them could speak German, and they told us that they had at first thought we were British, because the Germans had told them the Americans would never come. Their joy and hearty welcome were pleasing, yet very pathetic. They were boundlessly happy at their release from captivity, and seemed to care not a straw for former, present, or future troubles. To them, we were a band of heroes, come to bring retribution upon the Hun and free the rest of Belgium. They told us that for several days the Germans had held out in strong positions back of the Lys River and could not be dislodged. Their faith that we could and would drive them from this stronghold was as inspiring as it was touching. Here, we decided, were a people worth fighting for.

At one place where we halted something happened which we had never experienced in France. The children came running out with water and carefully washed turnips for us to eat. One woman brewed pot after pot of coffee, exhausting her meager supply that we might have it. To refuse hurt their feelings, and they declined to accept money. We compromised by giving that to the children. Another woman brought out two buckets of precious milk and sold it to us at an absurdly low price. It must be remembered that cows were scarce. Most of the cattle and horses had been driven away or butchered by the retreating enemy. The eager kindness of these people touched us to the very depths of our hearts. They offered us everything they had, expecting no return and asking nothing. Of course, we were to find out later that there were mercenary people in every land, but that does not affect our whole-hearted, genuine affection for the Belgians as a people.

When we arrived in Lichtervelde we were welcomed enthusiastically and were billeted in barracks abandoned by the Germans.

Next morning, Sunday, we had a formation for an inspection of gas masks and helmets, followed by policing of quarters, which had been left in a very dirty condition. During the rest of the day we were free. The majority of us scattered through the town and surrounding country in search of articles of food—French rations were simply not enough for us. About all we could get was a meager supply of milk and bread. It was here that we first encountered the solid, brown, bran-bread of Belgium. A loaf of it was as solid and heavy as rock, and encased in a tough crust. The inside looked like baked sawdust. We soon learned to like it immensely, however, and preferred it by far to the tasteless French army bread that we were receiving.

We found Lichtervelde to be scarcely touched with the exception of the railroad, which was torn up even worse than it was at Staden. The French already had German prisoners at work upon it here. The town was decked in Allied flags and a few stores were open. Very little liquor, aside from a poor grade of beer, could be procured. During the day we discovered wooden bunks in a German military hospital and carried many of them to our barracks. Our labor brought very little reward, for we moved out the following morning.

Thielt

October 28th-October 30th

On Monday, October 28th, we were routed out at 5:30 a. m. to roll our packs for another move. Breakfast over, we fell in at 7 o'clock and moved out with the rest of the regiment. It was a bright sunshiny day and we were in fine spirits, although, to be

truthful, it must be said that we indulged in a good deal of cussing of the Belgian roads. They were a new type to us and were already beginning to get our feet. These roads are the worst drawback to soldiering in Belgium; built of old, worn cobblestones between which are wide interstices, and usually covered with a slime of thin mud, they cause the feet to slip and the legs to strain unduly hard in order to balance the weight of the body. One's feet are continually slipping, at toe or heel, into the wide crevices, and nothing so enhances the difficulty of marching and maintaining a steady pace as an unstable footing.

Passing through Goolscamp and Pitthem, good sized towns, we made Thielt, our destination, by 11:30 a. m., and were quartered in a great, unfinished, brick convent.

Thielt, a flourishing town of twelve thousand before the war, is the largest town in which we have ever been billeted. It contains many shops and stores, all of which were exceedingly well stocked when we arrived. The place was left undamaged by the enemy with the exception of the little bit done by shellfire as the Allies were occupying it. The people flocked along our line of march and gave us a glad welcome. Probably no American flags were procurable—they had not expected us, anyhow—but the streets were hanging full of Belgian, French and English banners, and the people made up in kindness what they lacked in that sort of demonstration.

The huge convent in which we were quartered had ample room for the entire regiment. It had been used for troops by the Germans to a small extent, but the greater part had been evidently a military hospital. Great care had to be taken regarding the showing of lights, as enemy planes bombed the vicinity several times while we were there.

There was an observation tower which the Germans had built on the roof of the building. The tower was boxed by a flat railing on which arrows had been burnt into the wood, pointing the direction and giving the distance in kilometers to various outlying towns. There was also a steel range card on which were engraved the directions and ranges to certain towns and points of strategical interest. The view of the flat surrounding country was wonderful; no less than twenty-four windmills could be seen, and the farmhouses were so numerous that the entire land looked like an enormous red-roofed city. It was easy to realize that Belgium was the most densely populated nation of Europe.

Behind the convent, which was on the very edge of the town, was a former German aviation field, now converted to the uses of *the French*. From this spot French planes made numerous trips *at all hours of the day and night* to the front.

We were totally ignorant as to the actual distance to the front from Thielt; most of us believed it to be at least thirty kilometers, as only occasional faint cannonading could be heard. Therefore, when the rumor came that we were going over the top in a drive on the thirty-first, only a day or so away, we scoffed at the idea. "Why," we said, "we are scarcely well enough equipped and our new men know nothing about machine guns!"

One of the expressions which has stuck in our minds is the first one we learned in Belgium: "All iss ka-poot by der Dutch!" It corresponds to that abominable French remark: "Fineesh!"

If you asked to buy milk they replied, "All iss ka-poot." If you asked for butter, "All if ka-poot." And if you asked for anything and they failed to understand you, they invariably took refuge in the same reply, "All iss ka-poot!"

Even the mademoiselles were ka-poot, by heck!

One or two little incidents of the many that occurred will serve to illustrate the kindness of the people and their desire to please us.

As we were marching through the town, and had almost reached the convent, a runner of Headquarters Platoon was dropped off at a street corner to meet and guide the kitchen. An old woman beckoned to him from a doorway and insisted that he come inside. He stood in the entry to please her, and unnoticed by him, she prepared coffee and a plate of bread and jelly. He tried to refuse when she brought it to him, but she was not to be denied—besides, jelly is tempting to the palate of a soldier. Her obvious contentment and happiness as she watched him eat and drink, the soldier says, made him think of home and his mother.

Later in the day two men tried to buy bread at another place. The old man had none to sell, but he actually pushed them, though they protested, into another room and made them partake of bread, butter and coffee before permitting them to go.

More than one of us got an unwelcome addition to our stock of experience when we were in the German barracks at Lichtervelde. German fleas and cooties started new and speedily flourishing colonies in our shirts!

The damned things are such sociable vermin! Once they force their friendship upon you they are untiring in their misguided dem-

onstrations of affection. No doubt we were better fare than their former hosts. Even a flea or a coot can be particular about his meals.

Wee! Ya! Nein! Fineesh! Ka-poot! What next!

The kitchens of the regiment were nearly mobbed by ill-clad men, women and children when they began to give them the leftovers and the soup bones from quarters of beef.

FIRST OFFENSIVE IN FLANDERS



October 31st-November 5th

We had expected to stay in Thielt for some time, but these dreams received a rude jolt when, on Wednesday morning, the thirtieth, we received orders to be in readiness to move out by 4:30 p. m. At that hour we formed our column, and, leaving Thielt by the road leading southeast to Denterghem, reached a crossroads near the Lys River, one kilometer from the town of Olsene. We had hiked about fifteen kilometers.

Here, Sergeant Bernard Roney, who had preceded us to procure billets, met the company with the information that Olsene was being bombarded by the enemy with such vigor that to enter the streets of the town would be suicidal. Indeed, it was easy to confirm his statement, for at that very moment the Germans let loose a heavy strafe, and for the past hour we had been aware of the sound of cannonading, steadily increasing as we approached. Roney had found a place for the night on the outskirts of the town. He declared it was bad enough, but the quietest place that could be found.

Led by Roney, we turned up the road to the right for a distance of a hundred yards, and then to the left, down a narrow hedged lane, to the bank of the swift flowing Lys river. Here we were held up for over twenty minutes by the congestion of traffic pouring over a narrow pontoon bridge. The wagons and kitchens of Headquarters and our own company went over, one at a time. Once they were held up by a stream of French artillery caissons, each drawn by six horses, which were racing to the ammunition dumps in the rear for a fresh supply of shells. Meanwhile, a very steady and wicked bombardment was going on. Hundreds of shells were tearing up the ground only fifty yards beyond the opposite bank. From the sound of heavier shelling on our left we knew that

Olsene was catching it, too. Had the Germans raised their range suddenly by seventy yards they could have wreaked havoc among us as we lay waiting to cross the stream.

Our wagons and carts having gone over, we in our turn poured across. The frail bridge swayed with the current underneath. When we regained close formation on the opposite bank we followed a newly made trail right on the edge of the river and quickly passed the laboring teams and wagons, whose progress was hindered by the innumerable shell-holes in the path. A Headquarters company wagon slithered over the bank, nearly dragging horses and driver with it, and its entire load of records and stationery supplies were sunk in the water. Runners were posted at every dangerous shell-hole we passed to warn our kitchen and combat wagon, struggling along behind us.

We had gone only a short distance when the smell of noxious gas began to irritate our noses, throats, and eyes. The further we went the worse this condition became; the atmosphere was charged with the acrid fumes of H. E. gas, the fumes from ordinary high explosive shells. It is not unlikely that tear-gas and small quantities of mustard gas were present also, for the water ran from our eyes, half blinding us, and our throats and nasal passages smarted unbearably. We clapped on our gas masks, but as progress was impossible in the darkness because of our inability to see through the eye-pieces, most of us merely clipped our noses and drew air through the mouthpiece, allowing the fabric of the masks to hang down.

Finally the officers came back and led us to a nearby house, the yard of which was enclosed by a high hedge. The house itself was half ruined and littered with bricks, fallen plaster, old clothing, and broken furniture. The majority of the men made their beds in the open along the hedge. Our mules and carts were placed in the enclosure also, but the kitchen and wagons drew up behind the house.

We were extremely tired, and slept soundly in spite of the constant shelling and flying shrapnel. Our rest was brief. At 4:30 A. M. we were aroused and ordered to make light packs and prepare to go over the top at 5:30.

Shortly before the zero hour we drew up,—mules, carts and all,—on the road behind the Courtrai-Ghent railroad, where our

front line lay. We were in the support line, only fifty yards from the place where we spent the night. Just as we halted a whizz-bang exploded at the roadside with a brilliant flash. We hastened to unload our guns and equipment, and deployed along the ditches and in the shell-holes. The mules and carts went back.



Just as dawn came, the French artillery supporting us let loose a terrific barrage and we started over. Jerry immediately poured upon us the most wicked concentration of H. E. and shrapnel we had ever experienced. Many men fell before they had gone twenty feet. It was a new kind of fighting. Instead of the wild Argonne forest and brush we plunged past little farmhouses, fought from strawstack to strawstack, surged down narrow lanes and roads, and forced our way forward through endless turnip patches. The country was generally flat, broken at intervals by low ridges, and offered no shelter, while the enemy took advantage of the high ground and swept our line with machine gun crossfire. He had machine gun nests in strawstacks, hedges, and houses, and knew how to use them. His artillery pounded us with fearful accuracy.

Under the leadership of dauntless Lieutenant Merriman, our company soon found itself with the first wave of infantry, and there we stayed. Nest after nest was surrounded and captured, and the prisoners streamed back. Soon we saw a strange sight. Civilians,—Belgian women, children, and old men,—emerged from cellars and bombproofs as the battle line passed their homes. They threw themselves upon us, hugged us, kissed us, and cried hysterically. There were women with bloody bandages around their heads, babes and children with bodies lacerated, and old men, too; all wounded by shrapnel or shellfire. They had stuck to their homes through the entire shock of battle, waiting for deliverance. Searching for Germans in every home, we found more of these poor refugees, seriously wounded or dead, and sent those who were still living on stretchers to the field hospitals.

Maddened by these sights we plunged forward in a whirlwind advance and swept the enemy back to Cruyshautem Ridge. Here they reorganized and we were forced to dig and remain all afternoon and night, under harassing shell and machine gun fire and gas attacks, until the morning of the next day, awaiting the aid of the artillery. Ration details brought up sandwiches through the heavy bombardment of our lines of communication, and we supplemented

these with turnips from the field around us. The soil at the base of the ridge was of soft texture, and we found it an easy job to dig in. Straw from the many strawstacks nearby was secured after dark, and filling our "fox-holes" with this we buried ourselves and slept warm.

The general line of the division's advance was southeast along the main road from Olsene to Audenarde. We were working with King Albert's Belgian Army for the relief of Ghent, or "Gand," as it is called by the Belgians.

Our regiment, at the end of the first day, had driven the enemy approximately four kilometers and were near Cruyshautem. Next morning we went over again behind a brief barrage and outflanked the machine gun nests. Our line swept over the ridge and Cruyshautem fell into our hands. During the night the Germans had withdrawn their main body, leaving only a few machine guns to guard their rear. From Cruyshautem on to the Scheldt we rambled merrily forward. Scarcely a single burst of shrapnel hindered us, and we had to reduce only one machine gun nest. That was done with the aid of French armored cars. The country was so flat that we could easily see the French infantry who were co-operating with us on the flanks. The sun shone gloriously and we sang and whistled as we tramped on. At times we even forgot that we were in a drive!

Shortly after noon we mounted a low grassy rise over which we had caught a glimpse of a church spire and an unusually high ridge beyond. When we reached the crest we saw before us the town of Eyne, on the banks of the Scheldt, and beyond was the high, dominating ridge.

Still in our cheerful, cocky mood, we entered the village. The civilians met us in crowds, waving Belgian flags, and giving us wine and beer. We crossed a high-banked railroad, and a parallel road, and streamed out upon the river flats. At a point one hundred yards from the river we came upon a wide ditch, deep with water. A ford of stones near the junction of another and narrower ditch caught our eyes and we concentrated unsuspectingly to make a crossing.

Up to this point not a shot had been fired. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, a terrific cross machine gun barrage poured in upon us. We rushed to cover in the ditches, men falling right and left, riddled by bullets. No sooner had we got into the ditches than the enemy, on the high ground across the river, opened up on us with direct fire of whizz-bangs, seventy-sevens, and one-pounders. The slaughter, especially among the infantrymen, was terrible. With the heavy machine guns, tripods and ammunition boxes on our hands, we were in "a devil of a fix." We hung on for several minutes and then an order was shouted to retire. Crawling on our hands and knees *back up tributary ditches* and spurting along the open road we finally

extricated ourselves and withdrew to the town to reorganize and take up defensive positions.

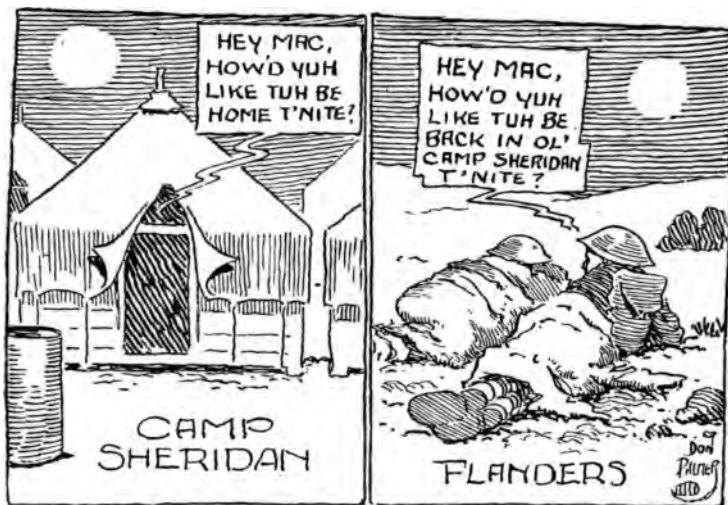
Company Headquarters was established in a house on the outskirts of Eyne, from which a view of the railroad and the hill across the river could be obtained. Audenarde, the objective of the Ninety-first Division, the other American division in the drive, could be seen up the river to the right, about three kilometers distant. The enemy shelled Eyne constantly and, due to the absence of Allied aircraft, their planes, flying low, harassed us with bombs and machine gun fire. Several times these planes swooped over the courtyard of our headquarters and splintered the stones with bursts of bullets.

When night came positions were taken up behind the high railroad bank in houses from which we could protect the flanks of the infantry with our guns. Then we settled down to the nerve-racking job of hanging on under fire until the Engineers could get a pontoon bridge across. It was distinctly understood that if they failed, we would swim the river under fire.

Early the next morning, November 2nd, a small body of men succeeded in swimming the river, and laboring under hot machine gun fire and shrapnel, threw a foot-bridge across by fastening tree trunks end to end. Many of our boys died or were seriously wounded in attempting to get over, but late that afternoon a total of fifty-two were on the other side and thus a foothold was established. Men crept over that night, one at a time, during lulls in the frantic German fire. Next day the contest for the river continued. The enemy became desperate and their planes circled and dove head-on, sending showers of machine gun bullets along the stream and bombing at close range.

The German efforts were of no avail; the engineers succeeded, after three attempts, in getting a pontoon bridge in place near Heurne. By nightfall over nine companies of infantry and four of machine guns were dug in on the opposite side. They held that footing in spite of counter attacks, resisting all efforts to dislodge them.

On November 4th, our objective, the establishing of a bridge-head over the Scheldt, having been accomplished, we were relieved by French troops, although a portion of the division did not get out until the 5th. We were the first and only Allied troops to cross and establish ourselves on the other side of that famous river.



Stories of the Belgium Drive

On the second day, when we ran into the machine gun nests and artillery fire at the Scheldt, our squad was sure having a lively time of it. To escape, we flopped flat along a shallow ditch filled with water. Private Siem, who wears 11 1-2 shoes, was lying close to me. A large piece of shrapnel came flying through the air and buried itself in the ground near his feet. It scared him and he stuck his feet into the ditch.

"Take your feet out of the water, Siem,—they'll get wet!" I said.

Siem studied a moment, and then replied:

"Well, what in hell else will I do with them!"

—CORP. JOSEPH HERMAN.

Private Oscar Rotenberg sends us this one:

"One day, on October 30th, we started on hike from Thielt, Belgium. We hike along until we cross the Lys river on a platoon bridge. When we cross the river I hear a noise about gas. I start to smell because when I was in Camp Grant they told me when I get one smell of gas I will get killed. I had about 150 smells of that gas and I never got killed. About 3:00 o'clock in the morning I hear a voice all machine gunners fall on their carts. I obey the order

and when we unload them I grab my two boxes of ammunition and followed my corporal looking for the top. I hear some things singing around and everybody drops in a shell-hole and so do I and start to wait when I am going to die. When I was in the 161st Depot Brigade I was transferred to machine gun. The fellows told me that a machine gunner's life going over the top is 1 1-2 seconds. I looked at my watch 30 seconds and still I was a life, and I never got killed at all in the drive so I think they was all damn liars!"

You tell 'em, Oscar!

A Bit of Doggerel!

As I lay beside a hay-mound,
Listening to that awful sound,
The roar of the cannon and shrapnel shell,
Splitting the air like a message from hell.
It was Hallowe'en Eve and I'll never forget,
Lying there in deep regret,
Thinking of pie and puddings of plum,—
You see, for supper, I had nothing but slum,—
Thinking of home and how nice 'twould be
If only I was in that land o'er the sea.
I would eat pumpkin pie 'til I had my fill,
And mother, I knew, would charge no bill.
But I slept very sound that chilly night,
As a tired soldier will, after a hike,
I was roused from my slumber at four o'clock,
A voice said, "Get up. We go over the top!
Haul your ashes! Make a short pack!
Soon you'll hear our machine guns crack!"
At five o'clock the Froggie artill'ry,
Let loose a barrage that knocked the Huns silly.
Over the fields the Yanks did charge,
Paying no heed to the German barrage.
Yelling, "Jerry, you had better retreat,
For we are an army that knows no defeat!"
—PVT. VOLNEY L. RICE.

A few hours after we went over the top our kitchen was blown full of holes by shrapnel and all the boilers were ruined. Now ain't that a hell of a note? We surely had hard luck with kitchens.

Lieutenant Merriman was wounded on the afternoon of November 2nd, at the Scheldt river. He and Private Lowry, a Headquarters Platoon runner, had been out beyond the railroad where the

Lieutenant had done some reconnoitering. Shrapnel or a shell fragment broke a finger and wounded him severely in the thigh, disabling him. It proved to be his "Blighty" wound, for he went home a couple of months later. Merry was a man with "all kinds of guts" and we were surely sorry to lose him.

Joe Rock says: "The civilians were awaiting us at the entrance of the town with Belgian colors waving to pay us a tribute. They wanted us to stop and have a drink, but it seemed we didn't have time to celebrate. And I ain't had a free drink since I left home!"

"On the first day out," says Hal Davis, "we ran into a part of the enemy barrage and what we thought was a gas shell exploded near us. The whole squad put on their masks. After a few moments Snake Eye Preston took his off and looked at me as though to say, 'Keep yours on, you damn fool, if you want to! But after he had taken three or four breaths, a horrified expression came to his face and he got his mask on toot-sweet! I laughed a sepulchral laugh, and Preston, I suppose, cussed me, but all I could hear was, 'Blub, blub, glub, ub, blub!'"

"A helmet ain't worth a damn," said Beardsley.

"Who said the helmet's no good," cried Raufman. "If the helmet wasn't no good I wouldn't be here to tell you about it, and if it ain't no good why did they make 'em?"

Well, well, Raufman, you don't say so!

Stellato was telling a story.

"..... and this guy got excited and said, 'We'd better go to the rear,' but I said, 'No,' and convinced him by saying that if we went back we'd get shot in the rear."

Slim Walters and Carl Munson were squeezed tightly together in a fox-hole. Slim had the cooties and created commotion every so often by turning over to take a whack at them. Just as regularly as Slim turned to battle cooties, Jerry would send over a shower of machine gun bullets.

"It kept me busy warning him not to draw fire," says the humorous Private Munson.

Perk was as hungry as a bear. A heavy bombardment had kept *him* in the cover of a shell-hole when we wanted to get out into the *surrounding turnip* field in the worst way. He was wailing dismally

about turnips when a close one,—darn close,—lit in the field and showered him with the coveted vegetables.

"It is a dispensation of Providence," said Perkinson, munching a nice white turnip.

Milking goats was another accomplishment added to our long and varied list on the Belgian drive. First get two dudes to hold the goat, then get one to milk it. All participants should wear gas-masks.

Private Homer Price was wounded in the left arm by shrapnel on the first day out, about two hours after the drive began. He was ordered to go back to dressing station, although he made light of the wound. After having his arm dressed, he refused to go to the hospital and made his way up to the company. His arm grew worse, but he stuck with us throughout the drive.

Actions speak louder than words!

Walter Lewis was wounded in the right arm by flying shrapnel just as the drive started. He was leading his mule back to the old house after his cart had been unloaded. He was the first casualty our company had in Flanders.

Sergeant Paul Gusler, one of the best men ever in this company, was killed instantly on the first morning of the drive, by the explosion of a shell which struck within three feet of him. Sergeant Gusler was leading his section out of hot shellfire when a high velocity shell, which came so quickly that he and his men could not dodge, landed in their midst. His record was one of high courage and constant devotion to duty, and his loss was a blow not only in a military sense, but also to his comrades, whose affections he had so completely won and deserved.

Genner Carelli, one of the new men in the company, was struck on the first day out, by a six-inch shell-fragment. It hit his leg flat, and though it did not bring blood, bruised him severely. His leg swelled up to twice its normal size and he was unable to walk. Elmo Stults (also a new man) started after coffee at Eyne and ran foul of a piece of shrapnel. He got it in the left arm.

Sergeant Stimmel was gassed, for the second time, in the Belgian Drive.

Charles Albaugh was severely wounded in the knee by a fragment of the shell that killed Sergeant Gusler. When last heard from

he was in an English hospital, and it had been necessary to amputate his leg. The knowledge of his further misfortune fills us with regret. We can only pay him the tribute due a good and courageous comrade.

Arthur Avery stopped a bit of shrapnel, on the first day out, near the Courtrai-Ghent railroad. It got him in his right arm.

Lieutenant Merriman's idea of a good time was to stand up and look around during a machine gun barrage! And if he saw shells lighting some distance away from him, he seemed to have a misguided idea that he ought to go over and see about it. Merry had more "guts" than a boa-constrictor!

Dick Dawson, one of the men who joined us just before we left for Camp Lee, was wounded while getting Corporal Albaugh to the dressing station.

Melvin Wheeler, the brother of Lloyd, who died of wounds in the Argonne, came near to the fate of his brother on the first day of the Belgian Drive. While going up a ditch just beyond the Courtrai-Ghent railroad he was struck in the neck by a machine gun bullet. He fell, bleeding profusely, and was in a serious condition when he arrived at the hospital.

Every one of us,—his old comrades,—wish to congratulate him upon his recovery.

George Sierer was burnt severely by mustard gas. This was not the ordinary flim-flam gas which many men got just because they were sick of the war, and wanted to beat it for a while. This was the real thing. He got it in the vicinity of the pistol pocket. For particulars, see George.

Frank Schanes, another of the men who joined us at St. Mihiel, was wounded in the side by a flying brick. He was coming back out of the Scheldt machine gun nests, and just as he rounded the corner of a house, a shell struck the corner and he was hit by one of the heavy bricks, which came flying in all directions.

Ben Swihart, who has been a member of the company ever since the winter at Camp Sheridan, received a scalp wound at the Scheldt river. He was dashing across an open space and a machine gun bullet grazed his head.



Meulebeke

November 5th-November 9th

On the night of November 4th, after a weary drag from Eyne, our company pulled into Olsene, the starting point of the drive, and went to the dilapidated old house where the blanket rolls were left. It was then almost midnight and the few hours until morning were devoted to rest and sleep. We cared not where we laid down. We wanted sleep!

After breakfast the next morning we started on what proved to be a long, discouraging hike to the large town of Meulebeke, south of Thielt, arriving in that place at 2:30 P. M. We were billeted with several other companies in a big dismantled factory, or machine-shop; the roof was of the saw-tooth type and was fitted with skylights, a fact that caused us no end of trouble because we were forbidden to have lights at night. We had them, but we were continually "catching hell" for it. The building was surrounded by a broad muddy courtyard, and the entire place was enclosed by a high wall, along which open sheds had been built. Under these sheds, along one side of the wall, were placed the kitchens, while the horses and mules were stabled on the far side.

The city of Meulebeke, itself, was rather a drab, uninteresting place, containing large numbers of small stores, and many factories. It reminds us a great deal of the factory districts in cities at home. A Y. M. C. A. canteen and a U. S. Army commissary, however, were about the only things that attracted us to the center of town. Most of us remained in or about our billets, quite content to take advantage of a chance to rest.

While we were at Meulebeke we were partially re-equipped and arrangements for bathing were made. We also had the good fortune to receive a flood of mail, our first in a long time, and any soldier will understand without further explanation the wonderful rise in spirits it produced.

The first inkling of the capitulation of Austria reached our ears at Meulebeke. It illustrates the truth of the statement that a soldier on the very front line, in the thick of the fight, knows less about the situation than the folks at home.

Leather vests, or jerkins, were issued at Meulebeke. We were overwhelmed with astonishment and joy at this evidence of munificence on the part of our Uncle Sammy,—and then they called them all in!

Well, well,—that's like some men, and army kitchens, on a drive. Now you see 'em and now you don't!

In those letters we received were the first ripples of joy and subsequent disappointment caused by the peace rumor we heard back at Juoy, France.

Chabala reports that he came to the company at Meulebeke with the seat of his breeches in such condition as to be scarcely presentable to ladies. We, on our part, retort that this company was no Ladies' Aid Society, and it wasn't our fault if he had to do his own mending.

Chabala also says that Sergeant Fry put him on a detail, after asking him whose blouse he was wearing, and that he had to get the Top Buck to introduce him to convince Fry that he wasn't wearing some sergeant's stripes just to get out of details!

Cook Mooren—"Just received an order to feed fifteen more men at supper tonight. Where'll I get the extra eats?"

Mess Sergeant Byram—"Oh, just add a few handfuls of flour to the slum."

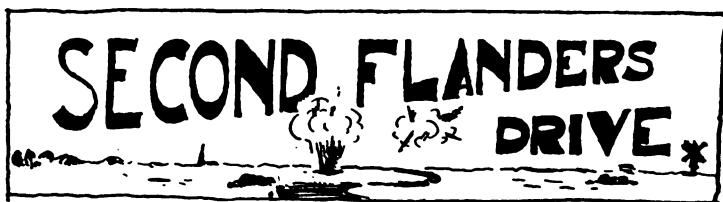
Vujich was being teased by a few of the boys. Finally, in exasperation he exclaimed: "Aw, lay down wid dose pops!"

The French soldiers insisted that Germany was going to sign an armistice and that the war would be over in a few days. We merely scoffed at them, but can you blame us for being incredulous after that previous disappointment?

It was at Meulebeke that we were outfitted with those unspeakable, flat-footed English shoes.



SECOND FLANDERS DRIVE



November 9th-November 11th

On the morning of Saturday, November 9th, we were notified to be ready to leave for the front at 1:00 P. M. We had heard rumors of another drive, but as the regiment, together with the 148th Infantry, had borne the brunt of the first drive and had been badly cut up, we concluded that we would be put in the division support-line this time, and so the news disturbed us very little. The other two infantry regiments were probably to get their turn now. This surmise proved correct, as we discovered that they had preceded us the day before.

We left Meulebeke at 2:30 p. m. by the road leading east to Denterghem. Shortly afterward we turned off at right angles and, having progressed possibly three or four kilos we noticed a column of troops going in the opposite direction on another road a short distance cross-country. "Lucky dogs!" we thought. "You're going back." A few hundred yards further on we came to a town and great was our surprise when we turned a few corners and found ourselves on the same road on which we had seen the other troops. Then it dawned upon us that we had seen the head of our own column, just as we could now see the tail-end dragging into the village. We were mystified. "Gosh!" one private exclaimed, "maybe the war's over and we're going back to Meulebeke." Few of us were that optimistic, but it was evident that something was wrong. We were not long in finding out, for fifteen or twenty minutes later we turned into the Denterghem road once more at a point which we saw was only two kilometers from Meulebeke. Someone had made an error and taken the wrong road, we concluded bitterly, and we had suffered for it. (We found out later the explanation was that a French traffic officer had declared the road to be a one-way road, and forced us to make the detour.) At the time we could only see the fact that for some reason or other we had hiked five unnecessary kilometers and the further we went the more the injustice rankled.

That extra five kilos had a terrible effect, equipped, as most of us were, with the new English shoe. When we turned off near Denterghem in the direction of Deynze we began to "cuss" in earnest. By the time we straggled into Deynze we were too worn and weak and footsore even to do that. We had marched twenty-five kilometers, and dozens of us found our socks stiff with blood and the soles of our feet raw, when we finally got into billets in a big granary on the bank of the Lys.

It was 9:30 when we reached those billets in Deynze. We hurriedly threw down blankets on the meal-sacks and fell asleep, "caring not a damn" whether we were in reserve or on the front. As a matter of fact we were in division reserve and only two kilometers from the front line,—within easy shell-range, as was indicated by the occasional flares and explosion of shells we had noticed as we came into the town.

It seemed to us that no sooner had we fallen asleep than the raucous voice of a sergeant reverberated through the great room. Drowsily we turned over on our lumpy beds and cursed him for a meddling fool. Why didn't he go to bed and shut up? But the sergeant was in earnest and finally we began to realize that it was something besides a mischievous prank. "Get up! We move in half an hour. Get up! you, and roll your packs!" Thus, one by one we were routed out. It was 3:30 A. M. What in the name of the devil were we going to do? Wide awake now, and chuck full of venomous thoughts which we didn't care to keep to ourselves, we rolled packs and spouted invectives.

It was a strange mixture of anger and despair and a sense of injustice that filled our hearts. We had eight or ten kilometers to hike before daylight!

Fresh fuel was added to the fire of resentment that burned hotly in our breasts, when we reached the courtyard below and had to stand around in the cold. It was pitch-dark, and the tangle of mules, carts, wagons and horses was never unraveled until daybreak. Then, two hours late, the regiment started southeast out of Deynze.

Once on the road, our anger cooled, we accepted the situation with our usual philosophy, and soon were in our habitual marching mood,—joking, "chewing the rag," commenting on the things we saw, and singing snatches of songs. The rumor came that the enemy had retreated a long distance under cover of darkness, and we, accordingly, had to move up so as to keep in touch with the front line.

We passed long lines of French infantry and artillery who were returning from the front. They were in high spirits, singing and whooping and shouting, "Finis la guerre!" "Finis la guerre!" "Vive l'Amerique! Vive la France!" "Finis la guerre!" We

laughed at them in derision, which only caused them to become frantic in their efforts to convince us "Oui! Oui! La guerre est fini!" One American summed up our opinion of all this in two words; a Poilu slung a volley of excited, jumbled explanations in French at him and he replied, "Aw, G'wan!"

At about 9:00 A. M. we halted and fell out in a bit of scrub woods which offered concealment for our carts and animals. The occasional reports of cannon and staccato "tap—tap—tap—tap" of machine guns could be distinctly heard. "Finis la guerre!"

We laid under cover of this woods until 3:00 P. M. and had a hot meal at noon of bully-beef stew, coffee, bread and molasses. Then after a three kilometer hike, we entered the village of Huyse and were quartered in an old courtyard and the adjoining garden. As it was unknown at what hour we might have to move on, we were ordered to pitch pup-tents or make our beds in the open, as we chose, but to be in "constant readiness to depart." That night there was considerable shelling of the ridge fifty yards beyond the town.—Finis la guerre!

THE ARMISTICE

We were rather surprised when we awoke the next morning to the realization that we had not been disturbed during the night, and that there were no signs at all of moving out.

That morning the French and Belgian soldiers, and even the civilians, seemed clear "beside themselves" with joy and excitement. They assured us again and again that the war was over. At 11:00 A. M. all fighting would cease. The Germans had signed the armistice which had been offered in the nature of an ultimatum by General Foch. We were frankly skeptical. Eleven o'clock came and went almost unnoticed, so little faith did we have in what we called a wild rumor.

Several hours afterward it began to dawn upon us that perhaps there was something to the story. No firing had been heard since that hour. We fought against allowing ourselves to believe, however, for the memory of our previous disappointment still rankled. No official announcement had yet been made and we tried to brush the tempting thoughts of peace from our minds. Later, our officers assured us that the armistice was an established fact. Even then we were not fully convinced. It was too good to be true.

It is difficult to say just when we did fully realize that the war, so far as fighting was concerned, was over, so gradually did the knowledge come. To say that we indulged in wild celebrations would be a falsehood. No official bulletins were issued. We had nothing but verbal statements to depend upon, and these we could not place faith in. Perhaps full belief came when we got hold of a two-day old newspaper, on November 13th, which described the effect upon the world and the complete story of Germany's defeat. The greatest day in the history of man had passed unknown to us!



Guess the Frogs and Belgies thought we were pro-German because we called them liars and wouldn't help them celebrate.

The boys in the front line resurrected an old baseball and celebrated by playing One Old Cat in No Man's Land.

Several days after the signing of the armistice we found out that the boys of our division were chasing Jerry right up to the last minute. They went over the top on the morning of the eleventh and rambled two kilometers before the orders to cease hostilities came to them. The old Thirty-Seventh was driving to the very end!

Our Second Belgian Drive ended, the world went mad with joy, and the Kaiser was "kapoot" at exactly the eleventh hour, the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the year.

The question uppermost in our minds at 11:00 o'clock, November 11th, was, "When do we eat?"

Now that the chance of killing us off in battle was gone, some arm-chair strategist started to kill us by drilling us.

Slatinsky (horseshoer)—"Wotta hell I care if war is over? I gotta shoe these dam mules jus' same!"

Dainus—"Yeah! An' I can't get no more sooweneers!"

Vic—"Well, Ray, what are you going to do now that the war's over?"

Johnson—"Go home and get married, I guess."

Vic—"Gosh, haven't you had enough fighting?"

Hamer Farrell hit it just about right. Several young privates were building aircastles of an early trip home.

"You'll be lucky if you get home by next spring!" remarked Hamer.

And they called him a pessimist!!

Vujich was telling the Skipper about a French soldier he had been talking with in a street in Huyse.

"He was tell me like dis. He poundem chest and holler in French he was four year in the war. Then he dance around like dis—and holler, 'Fineesh la guerre,—me fineesh!' And he throwem belt and canteen and rifle over fence!"

Richner, finally convinced that the war was over, got excited and drank his milk straight instead of diluting it, as usual, with water. This excess was too much for him, and he succumbed to the effects of this powerful stimulant. He behaved so scandalously that he nearly lost his quill.

"Well," remarked Pap Southworth, when asked what he thought of the war now, "I'm sorry to say that I have not yet succeeded in forcing the Cooties to sign an armistice. I have just read my shirt and find to my sorrow that they have over-run the——er——Alsace-Lorraine Sector and are advancing on Brest!"

For a whole week after the signing of the armistice the Frogs and Belgies continued celebrating. Every night the countryside was alight with rockets and flares, and the explosions of hand-grenades and dynamite kept us in a constant state of apprehension lest the war was starting again!

HUNDELGEM

November 18th-November 21st

While we were at Huysse many rumors were abroad among the men. Some said that we were going back to Thielt and thence to France; others that we were to follow the Germans through Belgium to the Rhine.

On Sunday, the 17th, a cloudy, cold day, we left the village at 3:00 P. M. and hiked five or six kilometers to Syngem, where we were billeted overnight in a small, unused schoolhouse. Next morning we marched ten kilometers to Hundelghem, in the direction of Brussels. It looked as though we were going to follow up the Huns, sure enough. The weather had continued cold and we encountered light flurries of snow, which made the cobblestones wet and slippery, and hiking very difficult.

At Hundelghem, a fairly large village, we were billeted in several large barns, full of clean straw. Although these quarters were cold and draughty, they were much better than any we had been in for many weeks. Our kitchen was established under the covered entry-way into the courtyard of an Estaiminet, or wineshop, near our billets.

No dry fields were available for drill, so, during our stay here we loafed about the town,—a state of affairs quite to our liking. We expected any day to receive orders to proceed to Brussels, where the division was to parade, but it was found impracticable to send the entire organization. Instead, one thousand men, picked from every company of the two infantry brigades, went to the Belgian capital to represent the Thirty-Seventh in the review of Allied armies by King Albert.

"The Americans are wonderful soldiers," declared King Albert, of Belgium, at Courtrai, in an interview given correspondents of the American press on November 6th. He gave a message to the American people warmly praising the valor of the Yankee fighters.

"At first we knew the Americans only as great and sympathetic friends, but now we know them as brothers in arms," continued the King. "I have followed the progress of the soldiers from Ohio and the Pacific Coast, and they are wonderful. I am filled with admiration for them. I want American people to know that I appreciate

what their soldiers are doing for our poor stricken country, and also the bountiful aid furnished by America in food and clothing!"

We made writing rooms out of the many Estaminets in Hundelghem. You can't write a hot letter to your girl in a cold billet!

The manure piles in the barnyards were so numerous and fragrant that we couldn't help thinking we were back in France.

We were still on French rations, but hot Belgian bread with boo-coo butter kept us alive.

Waldo was reminiscencing. "When I left home," said he, "they laid off the six D. T.'s and two cops that they used to have to keep on the job around Doan's Corners in Cleveland."

Continuing in the above vein, just to show us what a hard guy he was in civil life, he said, "I used to play on a church basketball team. One night we were playin' another church team and it developed into a sluggin' match. The crowd got excited when I slugged one dude in the belly and the next thing I knew there was a minister hangin' around my neck, and six girls tryin' to scalp me!"

See the cooks, K. P.'s and mess-sergeant about mysterious process of converting sugar, candles and bread into cognac!

ISEGHEM

November 23rd-December 4th

Hundelgehm, Belgium, will always be remembered as the turning point in our lives which started our long, weary, slow progress toward home. A change of orders for the division set us on the road back toward the coast, while we had expected to move on to Brussels and thence to the Rhine.

Leaving that village on the morning of Thursday, November 21st, we hiked back ten kilometers to Nazareth, where we were billeted over night. The weather continued cold, especially at night, and we found our barn-billets very cold and draughty. A heavy hoar-frost encrusted the landscape when we awoke the next morning.

On that day we made one of the toughest hikes we had ever experienced, traveling twenty-five kilometers over the terrible cobblestone roads. By the time we reached Deynze we were already footsore and weary and extremely hungry,—we had had only a light breakfast. Fortunately we halted to rest in the streets of that city, and found that it had already sprung to life and, somehow, the stores had secured a stock of foodstuffs. Such delicacies as chocolate and grapes were to be had in great plenty, though at tremendous prices, and we crowded into the shops to buy things to eat. Five or six kilometers west of Deynze we turned south and were billeted in the town of Wacken, just before dark.

Our weary journey was far from being completed. On the morrow we dragged twenty kilometers further to the western outskirts of Iseghem. We neared our billets almost completely exhausted by the strain of the last three days of marching; many of the men had bleeding feet (the effect of the hated English shoes).

Iseghem, a city of fourteen thousand, is located about seven kilometers east of Roulers. Like Thielt, it contains many stores, all of which were well stocked and open for business, although the place was still in the process of readjustment after its recent release from the enemy. There were also many restaurants and cafes open, and an influx of questionable men and women was setting in; the town being full of French and American soldiers and money circulating freely.

Our billets were just outside the city limits in an old school-building which had been damaged to some extent by the passage of the battle-line a few weeks before. Practically all the windows were out, making it a very cold and draughty place for sleeping.

When we came to Iseghem we fully expected to push on to Roulers on the following day, but, although we lived in constant suspense, orders did not come until December 3rd. Meanwhile, we loafed and amused ourselves as best we could, usually in Iseghem, until Regimental Headquarters despairingly put out a drill schedule. We drilled one morning, it rained that afternoon and all the next day, and we left on the following morning. Drill, therefore, troubled us but little.

The first "We're going to LeMans" rumor cropped up at Iseghem. The worst of it is, we really believed we were going to en-train for that place from Roulers!

Private Harley VanScoit was a neat dresser. He had smuggled a nice pair of russet shoes through all our vicissitudes. Private George Tepper, assistant to the supply sergeant, at Iseghem, found out he had them and tried to "bull" him into turning them in. Scoit was too wise for him and George, the would-be neat dresser, got fooled in his nefarious plot.

Decker went into a drug store in Iseghem.

"Sir," said he, "I would like to get something for the cooties."

"Oui! Oui! Toot-suite!"

He brought forth a bottle of light colored liquid and Deck parted with ten francs. When he got back to the billets he went to his interpreter, Schneck, and asked him to read the label. Schneck read the following: "Castor Oil—Very Nice for Infants!"

"I walked into Private William Blakeman's billet," says Pap Southworth, "and found him sitting on his bunk with his undershirt on his knee."

"What's the matter, Bill?" I asked.

"Well, I've lost my first-sergeant cootie and three first-class privates in a skirmish near the Toul sector," he replied.

"Don't let that worry you, Bill," I told him. "I have a full company and I'll gladly lend you some."

"Fine!" says Bill. "I'll be able to pay you back tomorrow morning!"

Somewhere in this book we made quite a fuss over the kindness of the Belgians. We also remarked that unfortunately there are mercenary persons among the best of people.

At Iseghem, a certain private went with a comrade to a restaurant and ordered up a meal; nothing unusual about that, as we were on French rations. It cost ten francs for the two orders of steak and potatoes. A day or so later the troops in Iseghem were paid and francs began to flow freely. The two soldiers went back to the same restaurant. (French rations again had their goat.) They ordered up the same meal. This time the petite little waitress "horsed around a bit," so to speak. She patted the private's cheek coquettishly, and murmured in his ear, "Vingt franc, Monsieur, sil-vous-plait!" which was her pretty way of collecting twenty francs.

Now, an American soldier never argues over prices. Although dumfounded at this camouflaged robbery, the soldier paid.

But—as he went out the door he slipped a quart of cognac under his overcoat, and beat it, whistling contentedly.

"Do unto others as they do unto you," we might say, amending the Golden Rule.

French rations seemed to metamorphose into Chinese rations at Iseghem. Somebody must have gotten a corner on rice, drugged Uncle Sam, and unloaded the world's supply on the Machine Gun Company, or else the Q. M. C. and M. P.'s wouldn't eat it!

There were many cafes in Iseghem which suddenly blossomed forth, after our arrival, with wine, women and song. Most of them were run by French brigands, one in particular being operated by a trio who looked capable of anything from kidnaping to house-breaking.

There were two men and a woman. From the looks of the layout this dame was playing the part of the siren. They made a mistake there; only Frogs like "fat ones." She was an extra full bosomed skirt with a prodigious waist and other bovine proportions. Apparently she was about thirty years old, but judging from actions one might think she was nineteen. She wore clothes, except on her neck and shoulders. These clothes extended south to a point a bit below her knees, exposing large means of support. Her job was to give the boys the "come hither" look and peddle the wine.

The first of the two men was a particularly brigandish-looking brigand with a sharp pointed black moustache and black curly hair. His job was apparently that of floor-walker and chucker-out.

The other of the trio was the most mysterious and fascinating of the lot. He reminded one of the pictures, in magazines, of Paris Apaches. His job was to furnish the music, which he did in an imitable manner. A lean, wiry little fellow, in a close-fitting jersey sweater, with black straight hair parted in the middle and curving down beside his eyes, he was always seen perched upon a stool on top of a table, wringing outlandish music from an accordion and keeping time with a fascinating serpentine swaying of the body and humping of the shoulders. The most fascinating trait of this queer dude, however, was his habit of gazing unblinkingly straight ahead at nothing at all. If some excited Frog tried to fondle the mademoiselle (?) he never batted an eye. If the chucker-out chucked someone out he never flicked an ear. As for the chattering, clattering mob of dancers, wiggling and cavorting through the shimmy-shiver, he paid not the least attention to them. He was a being apart.

Few Americans were made fools of by attempting to dance with the many mademoiselles in the crowd. It wasn't dancing as we knew it in America, it was just a mad drunken whirl. We crowded into that cafe to watch the Froggies dance, but the thing that attracted us most was the sinuous swaying and wild music of the sphinx-like, black-eyed, seductive musician.

American girls wouldn't have worried so much over the danger of French and Belgian mademoiselles beguiling their boys if they could have happened to stand near one of the average type in a crowd and noticed the high-water mark on her neck and the grimy top of her undershirt (s'pose we ought to blush at mentioning unmentionables) peeping out around it.

Many of us got baths at Iseghem in the "Officers' Baths" formerly used by the Germans. Tile bath tubs, tile walls and floor, nickel plated fixtures, showers, hot water! Oh, boy!

Quaedypre

December 7th-December 17th

On the misty, warm morning of Wednesday, December 4th, we left Iseghem and hiked over the muddy, slippery cobbles to Roulers and thence to Staden, the town in which we had first been billeted in Belgium. Our dream of entraining for LeMans at Roulers was rudely shattered.

Spending the night at Staden, which town we found in the same condition it had been in a month and a half ago, we rose early and

made light packs. We were to hike forty kilometers across the old No Man's Land, and arrangements had been made to carry our blanket-rolls on trucks.

Forty kilometers over a broken land such as had been described before in this book is a terrible ordeal even under light packs. A glance at the map and the tracing of our route through the former towns of Langhemarck, Boesinghe, Elverdinghe and Poperinghe to Proven, coupled with the information that we were on the road, marching steadily, for eleven and a half hours, and that when we reached our destination forty per cent of the men had bleeding feet, is sufficient to make the reader understand why we term it the worst hike in our history; worse, even, that the memorable hike from the Badonviller front to Housseras. We started from Staden at 8:30 A. M. and arrived in Proven, thirty kilometers east of Dunkirk, at 8:00 P. M.

We were assigned to a cluster of wooden barracks, a former English camp, and after getting our blanket rolls from the pile where they had been dumped off the truck, we at once made up our bunks and went to sleep. Most of us were too weary to try to eat the supper of Canned Willie, bread, and coffee our kitchen prepared.

Proven was nothing but a mud-hole, and we were too much disgusted with affairs to be interested in it. We heard that we were to entrain, presumably for LeMans, at a nearby railhead, but that rumor failed to cause more than a ripple of sarcastic comment.

On the morning of December 7th we again took the road, this time under our usual full-pack, and hiked across the frontier into France. Early in the afternoon we reached the village of Quaedypre, having marched seventeen kilometers.

Quaedypre, a small community containing three or four stores and as many wineshops, is situated about five kilometers southeast of the ancient city of Bergues. Because of the difficulty in securing billets, the regiment was scattered over a wide area on the little farms surrounding the town. Our company was billeted in two parts; half the men were put in the loft of an old barn and the others in a cement floored barracks which had been left unfinished by the British. The place was absolutely open at all sides to the cold air. With only one blanket apiece it is not strange that we had a pretty chilly time of it while we were there.

Under pressure of orders, some attempt was made to drill us a few days after we arrived, but we did not exert ourselves to any great degree. We whiled away our spare time with cards and shooting crap, or sought amusement in the cafes of the town.

THE ENGLISH SHOES

(Apologies to Walt Mason.)

When I signed up to do my bit, for Uncle Sam, you know, I wore civilian shoes that fit and never scraped a toe. To walk the streets in rubber heels was easy as Sam Hill; we danced the Jazz and sundry reels and danced 'em fit to kill. The Army gave me russet shoes; at first I thought them rummies; when I set out to make a cruise they felt like two big mummies. A few days' use and they were "jake," and when our Stunt Night came, the dance steps I could safely take with ne'er a thought of shame. At Sheridan they wished on me a pair of army hobs. I drilled at first in misery; the hobnails felt like knobs. To do squads east and west was then almost too much for me, because I couldn't watch them when I held a pivot, see? But gradually I mastered those and handled 'em with ease. Our camp life soon came to a close; they shipped us o'er the seas. The Yankee hob we've learned to like; it's tried and proven fine; it is our friend on weary hike, or service in the line. But Belgian service introduced a boot that causes woes. These English shoes hurt like the deuce, with heel-plates on the toes. Top Sergeant Clough was 'roused one night and donned them in a hurry; he got the left one for the right, but he said, "I should worry." They work both ways that's true, we know, but when all's said and done, that doesn't help relieve the toe; besides, they weigh a ton. So when we sail for home again, with Yank shoes on our feet, we'll weep for English army men, and for the love of Pete, let's hope that English shoes at home don't change to these in style, for if they do, we cannot roam toward the Salvage Pile!

—VAN.

A severe and protracted epidemic of African Golf (genus Shootcrapus) began to appear in the company the day we were paid at Quaedyre. Prior to this time this virulent disease, the despair of doting mothers, ministers, and poker sharps, was confined to such creatures in the company as cooks, K. P.'s buglers, and the mess sergeant. Others had been infected from time to time, but heretofore *the malady* had never entrapped more than fifty per cent of the men.

At Quaedyre ninety-nine per cent of the company fell. Sergeant Bernard Roney was the only one who successfully resisted it.

African Golf is easily distinguishable by its startling effect. The victims invariably gather about a folded blanket laid on the floor or ground, and in the course of the next several hours conduct themselves like a Holy Roller Society, emitting shouts, yells, and considerable profanity while they conjure one another with such remarks (enunciated with intense feeling facilitated by acrobatic feats of facial distortion and accompanied by snapping of the fingers) as—"Come seven!"—"Crap him!"—"Read 'em and weep!"—"Baby wants a new pair of shoes!"—"Ho, feeber!"—"Big Dick!"—"Hit 'im natural!"—"Joe fer me an' I'll never drag!"—"Ninety days in the pie-house with a muzzle on"—and others too numerous to mention.

There is no cure for one who has fallen completely a victim of Shootcrapus, except that well known tonic, "Finishfrancs."

A brass rail is not an absolutely necessary adjunct to a good "stew."

The ancient city of Bergues, surrounded by fifty-foot walls and a wide deep moat, was guarded at the three entrances by misguided M. P.s. This, however, did not prevent such enterprising individuals as Waldo Clough (our peerless top-sergeant), Sergeant Cater, Privates Ray Johnson, Humpy Turner, Coleman, and several others, from finding a place to cross the moat and then scaling the wall by getting a fallen tree for a ladder. Sergeant Richner tried, but got cold feet and quit.

On the hike between Staden and Proven Vic Norris, right guide, was marching beside Lieutenant Fri, and smoking his pipe. The lieutenant does not smoke and his delicate nostrils were offended. He asked Sergeant Clough "if there wasn't some rule against smoking on the March." Clough said there was not. The lieutenant then went back to see the skipper about it, but must have received the same answer for he looked very sour and marched a yard or two ahead in order to escape the noxious fumes.

While on the march through the old No Man's Land we passed an old skull which lay by the roadside. A captain in the Medical Detachment, riding ahorse just ahead of the column, saw it and asked Sergeant Clough to hand it up to him. Clough did

so, and after examining it, the captain hung it to his saddle by the empty eye-socket and said he'd take it home as a souvenir. A private heard him make the remark and shouted:

"How old was the guy that owned that skull?"

"Oh, about twenty-eight," replied the captain.

"That's a hell of a time for a man to lose his head, ain't it?"

All the hikes and delays and disappointments that were loaded upon us couldn't squelch those day dreams and night dreams of home, the festive board, and our girl.

When we get home we'll refuse to sleep in our nice bed; we'll demand a shakedown of dirty straw, out in the chicken coop. We will not cuss the Y. M. C. A. We will demand that Mother give us half-cooked rice, oily bacon, weak coffee, and dirty bread for breakfast, slum for dinner, and cold beans for supper. We will deny ourselves even the light of a candle at night. We will "revel" at 5:30 every morning. (The foregoing is a damn lie!)

A certain Major is reputed to have ridden his horse into a cafe in Bergues and raised Cain in general. The M. P.s hauled him in and let him adorn a cell in the old dungeon until he got over his little jag. He was subsequently severely reprimanded and given extra duty. (First time we ever heard of an officer getting that.)

He vented his spleen upon about a dozen privates, whom he picked up in Quaedyre, by making them clean up the streets. It is interesting to observe the vagaries of some officers and the result upon the men.



December 17th-January 12th

Another dream—that of entraining at Bergues for the illusive city of LeMans—was rudely shattered on the seventeenth. Instead, we marched sixteen kilometers through Esquelbecq, near Wormhoudt, to the village of Arneke on the Dunkirk-Hazebrouck railroad. The problem of billeting was difficult, as around Quaedypre, and consequently the regiment was scattered over a large area. The main body of our company went into former British Barracks, just within the limits of the town and close to the railroad.

These barracks were of a type commonly used by the British Army and were known as "Baby Elephants," or "Bow-huts." Their construction was very simple; a wooden floor, about fifteen feet wide and thirty feet long, was surmounted by a semi-circular roof of corrugated iron, the highest point of the arch being about seven feet, and the open ends of the shelter thus formed boarded up. There were two windows of salvaged aeroplane fabric in each end and a single wooden door in one end. The huts numbered seven or eight in all and were set in a double row, forming a sort of street. One or two others stood off by themselves in the field. An English Y. M. C. A. Hut was right next door to these billets and our cooks found a British kitchen and messhall all ready for our use, thus making it unnecessary to cook out in the open on our rolling kitchen. It was a novelty to us to have tables to eat at; we were more accustomed to squatting on our heels in mud or setting our messkits on wagon tongues and logs.

The British Y. M. C. A. provided us a good lounging place. It contained writing tables, a small library, and a piano, and such things as cocoa, cakes, candles, matches, and milk were on sale at very reasonable prices. Later on, an American Y. M. C. A. opened up in the town, but the majority of us stuck to the little English Hut during spare hours. There were a few British soldiers in the town doing engineering work and we found them to be mighty fine fellows. They came often to the Hut and we enjoyed meeting and talking with them.

Arneke was a muddy, dirty, sprawling village; drab, uninteresting, and slow. It was so boring that we wondered how on earth

people could bear living their lives in such a place. There were few stores—a couple of groceries, four or five wineshops, and two restaurants or tea rooms, as they are called by the Tommies.

We were fated to remain in this place until after the New Year, although fortunately for our peace of mind, we did not know that when we came. The weather was simply rotten; it rained every day and the roads and fields were a sea of mud. In spite of these conditions half-hearted attempts were made to drill us; these usually ended, after a half hour of calisthenics, in a game of some kind, and we then retired to our billets for the rest of the day.

Let us explain at once that the game we usually played after calisthenics is known by an approbrious name which we could only state at the risk of being soundly censured by the Censor. However, by the use of perfectly legitimate literary camouflage we can impart the desired information by calling the game "Torrid Zone." The torrid zone is produced in an unfortunate comrade by chasing him diligently around a circle of men, encouraging him to gallop at high rate of speed by vigorous applications of a waist-belt to his nether portions. This zone can be made torrid by accidentally using the buckle-end instead of the free end of the belt. However, attractive this amusement may seem we must warn the uninitiated that it is not wise for Young Ladies' Clubs to attempt to play it.

Remember the Estaminet at the corner of the Rue de la Gare and the main street of Arneke? And the petite mademoiselle with that snug, blue sweatercoat?

On the morning of the 23rd Mademoiselle's papa asked her:

"Who was here with you last night?"

"Well—er—Marie was here, father."

"Well, tell Marie she's left her belt and spurs under the sofa."

(Note: Lt. Fri. remarked on the morning of the 23rd while in one of the bowhuts that he thought "She was a very beautiful girl.")

Oh, Pussy-foot! You li'l rascal!

Dainus, after drinking three bottles of Vin Blanc:

"Hell with dat Bond Winn. . . . Gimme Coneeack!"

Seaman was broke, but not without resource. He went into the English "Y" Hut at Arneke and solicited "clankers" for a "*poor family named Smith.*" Seaman missed his profession. He should *have been a solicitor of funds for the Y. M. C. A.*

When we hit Arneke, a meal of tough steak and "chips" cost us three francs; a week later it cost four francs; then it rose to five francs; and the day we left, the poor poverty-stricken Frogs, who had only been making two hundred francs a day, kindly let us pay six francs!

The Vinegar Blink that was sold in Arneke became Vinegar Blink au l'Eau a week after we arrived.

Christmas—1918

Christmas Day, as far as outward manifestations are concerned, passed rather quietly. We had a late breakfast and spent the morning, as was our habit on other days, washing, shaving and loafing. Some of us, who needed new shoes, walked a couple of kilometers to the supply dump to get them.

At 2:30 P. M. we had a good meal of meat-balls, mashed potatoes and gravy, salad, and cocoa. Having tucked that comfortably under our belts we were called into the messhall by the Captain. A supply of little kit-bags had come to us from the Red Cross, but unfortunately there were not sufficient available to give one to each man. The Skipper therefore arranged a lottery, and for the men who lost out on Red Cross Bags there was stick-candy in large tin boxes. The Y. M. C. A. issued a package of cakes, a pack of "Camels," a can of "P. A." and a bar of chocolate to each man, and the K. of C. sent us a box of cigarettes apiece.

As for the inner side of Christmas—the part locked deep within a fellow's heart—who can tell exactly what thoughts were passing behind the mask of the habitually cheerful countenances of "the boys"? They looked no different, they acted no different, yet it is safe to say that all of them were thinking more than usual of the home folks, of Christmases gone by, and thanking God that they weren't driving through shell and machine gun fire in that wet cold weather that typifies winter in France.

'Tis the day after Christmas,
Last night we were "tanks";
Today we are sober,
But minus our francs!

Speaking of Christmas makes us remember with a start that we never noticed the passing of Thanksgiving Day!

Some one of that bunch who call themselves the "Dirty Dozen" (among them Seaman, Freiter, Red Felkey, and others) conceived the idea that Christmas Eve wouldn't be complete without Christmas carols. The result was a parade and snake dance through the billets, each man with a lighted candle. Then they went over town and serenaded the Captain and the Colonel. A band of professional thugs, boot-leggers, second-story artists, and con-men attending a church-social could be no more incongruous than the singing by these "hard-guys" of that charming little ditty, "Up on the house-tops, click, click, click! Down through the chimney comes old Saint Nick!"

New Year's Day—1919


We celebrated New Year's Eve with Vinegar Blink and Cognac. Some of the boys paraded around the billets pounding tin cans and old kettles, yowling songs, and raking the corrugated iron of the Bowhuts with sticks, producing a pandemonium and racket quite befitting the occasion. On New Year's Day a field meet and machine gun contest was held with companies of the Machine Gun Battalion, and following a good dinner the Captain read the first Division order of the New Year, which stated that we would sail for the U. S. A. on the 30th of January. The text of the order was as follows: "The Division Commander wishes the 37th Division a happy New Year upon receipt of information that the Division sails for home on January 30th, 1919." Did we cheer? Boy, the natives thought we were going nutty!

On the second of January the Regimental Show was put on for our benefit at the Y. M. C. A. Though costumes and scenery were necessarily makeshift, their performance was a scream from beginning to end. Songs, new and old, and all "catchy," together with comedians and a stringed instrument four, held our interest for two good hours. Mike Patras, in a German helmet and jacket and false whiskers, made a hit with his song, "She never came back, she never came back, she never came back any more!" Rats Waters cavorted in the chorus, and Red Angell pulled the curtains.



A straight road.
The Kitchen on a drive.
O'Bannon with a quill out.
Richner with a quill in.
Coleman without Johnson.
Johnson without Coleman.
Supply Sergeant Frye with something you wanted.
Reber with his face washed.
Paul Cater with his mouth shut.
Freiter—ditto.
Tepper without a rumor.
Bath-houses.
Kid—Kid who?—why, Kid Gloves!
The Inside of a First Class Coach.
Decent sized towns.
Pie.
Norris without a pipe in his face.
Vandy's commission.
Gus Miller in a hurry.
"Rouge" Hall with a cool head—how *could* a red-head be cool?
"Stevey" without "Pop."
Kid Baxter not ready to battle.
A German division we couldn't lick to a frazzle—we never met one!
Furloughs to Paris.
An M. P. we liked.
Spees without a story to tell.
Engleman when he wasn't tinkering with a shell or a grenade.
Anybody near him when he was tinkering!
A taller man than Pete Mummy or Jesse Chisnell.
Angell, the curtain puller, without a dampfool remark.
A light pack.

On the third of January we received an awful jolt. The British gave us notice to get out of their Bowhuts, as they were going to tear them down. We were up the creek without a paddle. Lieutenant Fri got excited and chased us out ahead of time to a leaky old barn. The weather was raw and cold and we resented the change. About half the company sought their own billets—some went back to the Bowhuts to stay until actually kicked out, others slept in the box-cars on siding on the railroad, and a few secured rooms and regular beds in private houses. Leave it to an American soldier to take care of himself!



January 13-February 17th

The cars in which we were to leave Arneke were expected January 11th, but failed to show up until 6:00 A. M., January 12th. Leaving at 11:15 A. M. we traveled through Bergues, Dunkirk, and Bourbourg and then turned south, passing the outskirts of Calais and Boulogne before night-fall. We traveled steadily all night and the next day, passing through the large towns of Rouen and Laigle, and stopping at dusk in the city of Alencon. Here we dropped the cars bearing our mules and carts and proceeded in a westerly direction over a branch railroad to Pré-en-Pail where we were billeted.

We were now in the LeMans Area for troops scheduled to embark for the United States. The city of LeMans, itself, we never entered. It lay about fifty kilometers directly south of Alencon.

Pre-en-Pail was destined to be the graveyard of our hopes, for the thirtieth of January passed and we failed to move to a port. Black gloom and crusty skepticism now settled over us. Rumors died out for lack of fertile ground. We scoffed and reviled and finally became indifferent. Home never seemed farther away, and few of us could muster up the ambition to write letters. Is it any wonder that men in the company who had never gambled or touched liquor before let the bars down and shot crap or inhabited wineshops with the rest of us hardened sinners?

Delousing

Delousing! It began at Pré-en-Pail and we never heard the end of it until we reached home. Heretofore we had been content to keep our cooties down to a minimum number, say two or three thousand. We had become so used to these little visitors that we'd have been lonesome without them. Nothing gives one such a contented, homelike feeling as the sight of a comrade placidly reducing his tribe of insects to the desired number by stripping off his under-

shirt and cornering them in the various sectors. The kindred feeling is irresistible and we ourselves begin to itch deliciously until we get into the ring also. Competition as to who can produce the largest and fattest coots lends enchantment to the game. Now, however, we had to begin on them in dead earnest. Everybody wanted to go home, and we knew we couldn't take them with us.

On January 21st we rolled our packs and hiked fifteen kilometers to the delouser at St. Denis. Here we got a sort of bath, and our clothes and blankets were put in a delouser under live steam. The shower baths were a mere single fine stream of warm water and usually were cut off just when we were nicely soaped up! The delouser presumably killed the cooties, but we found out quickly enough that it only got about half of them.

Greenleaf cursed because his clothes came out barely warm and the cooties still ready for business. He swore it was a damned cootie incubator—not a delouser.

Krueger left a cake of soap in his blouse pocket and it came out a pocketful of "goo."

Harry Cater was running around like a mad dog when the water was shut off. He had his eyes full of soap and couldn't find his towel.

We took the mules and carts with us to carry our packs and men from the line companies thought we were taking the mules to be deloused!

On the hike to the delouser Vandivort was talking to a French soldier during a halt for rest. He wore the Croix de Guerre.

"You get those issued with your rations, don't you?" asked Vandy with an innocent expression on his face.

"Oui, Oui!" replied the Frog, feeling that he was being highly complimented.

Vandy and Eli Turner tore their breeches so as to get new ones. Alas, they were S. O. L. for all they issued at the delouser *was underwear* and socks!

Dunn was busy starting the fire in one of the mule leader's billets. The Captain came in, but Dunn was so interested in the fire that he failed to look up.

"Who's in charge of this billet?" asked the Skipper.

Dunn did not recognize his voice.

"I am," he snapped, without getting up or turning around. "What the hell do you want?"

"Stand up and I'll talk to you!"

Then Dunn woke up. Jumping to his feet, he saluted half a dozen times, and murmured, "Pardon me, pardon me! Pardon me, sir!—I thought you were Bigler!"



February 18-March 4th

The move from Pré-en-Pail to Fye was made on foot, but our packs, now so heavy because of recent additions to our equipment, were taken on trucks—we carried only one blanket and a slicker on our backs. We skirted Alençon, marching southwest, and, having hiked twenty kilometers, were billeted overnight near the village of Moline. A short hike—nine or ten kilometers—brought us to our destination about noon the next day.

The main portion of Fye was a kilometer distant from our billets, which were in a cluster of houses around a junction of two roads. Fye is one of the most commonplace, dull, and uninteresting towns in which we were ever unfortunate enough to be billeted. Our life there was equally dull—practically the only diversions were falling in for mess thrice daily and congregating in a stuffy wine-shop in the evenings. Some of the burden of existence was lifted whenever we could secure the band to crowd into the wineshop and play for us while we danced with one another or with the hotel chambermaid. That mademoiselle had the time of her young life with so many men vying for her. With a couple of field inspections thrown in, our dissatisfaction with life was complete. The two weeks we spent in Fye were nothing more than a blank in our existence.

More Cootie Hunts

On second thought it must be said that our existence at Fye was not entirely a blank—the cooties continued to hold the center of the stage. Cooties are most persistent little “animals.” The delousing we got at Pré-en-Pail had merely jolted them and by the time we reached Fye they had multiplied to a greater number than before. “Cootie Orders” from Headquarters now began to come in. We were instructed to get rid of them by any means available. We were advised “to press the seams of our clothing with hot irons”,—but no one could tell us where to get the irons! Our company settled down to a systematic cootie hunt, the extermination being aided by an improvised delouser and bath-house. Cootie inspections were held and the names of men having cooties were posted on the bulletin board at the kitchen. We were quite rid of *them—we thought*—when we left Fye.



March 5th-March 20th

Thanks to the foresight and thoughtfulness of the Captain, we made the hike of twelve kilometers from Fye to the railhead at Beaumont with ease. He arranged, after failing to secure trucks, to have our packs hauled on wagons which he hired from a French civilian. When we passed other companies who were sweating under full packs we realized and appreciated our good fortune.

At Beaumont we picked up our packs and, after receiving hot cocoa, cookies, and cigarettes from the Y. M. C. A., went aboard the troop-train. When we saw that we were to have real American box-cars a murmur of approval went from lip to lip, but, alas, when we found that fifty-eight men went in each car we could see that we would be no better off than we had been in French troop-trains. Probably the only advantage was that instead of having to subsist on travel-rations, or "iron-rations," as we called them, we were fed hot meals from the kitchen cars with which the train was equipped.

The train left Beaumont as scheduled at 1:42 P. M., and we ate our supper at Laval. We ran into heavy rain which forced us to keep the car doors closed, much to our discomfort and dissatisfaction. During the night we passed through Rennes, traveling steadily west. Late the following morning we arrived at Morlaix and halted for a few moments on the high bridge that spans the valley in which the city is built. The view of this ancient town far below us was a most pleasing sight. We were on a level with the highest church spires, and the people in the streets below looked like pygmies. Morlaix is a comparatively short distance from Brest, and at 12:30 P. M. we saw again the arm of the bay where we had landed in France nine long months before. The sight cheered us, not because we liked Brest—we detested it—but because beyond Brest was the broad Atlantic, and Home.

Rain and mud go together, and are the worst plague a soldier knows. We had rain and mud for our greeting at Brest. Leaving the train we marched to a semi-shelter, open partially at the sides, and unslung our packs. Then we went to the Embarkation Kitchens

and had our noon meal. These kitchens had not been there when we landed in Brest the summer before; they were one of the many improvements which we were to see.

After we had been fed we shouldered our packs and started on the hike up the long hill to the heights on which lay the camp. We had foreseen this hike and dreaded it, for the memory of our former experience was clearly outlined in our minds. On our backs, this time, we had the heaviest packs we had ever known, and it was almost a full hour of back-breaking work before we reached the summit of the hill. The camp could be seen in the distance. When we had last viewed this bit of land it had been barren pastures and dirt-walls and hedges. Now, what a change! We saw a vast expanse of dun colored squad tents that reached to the horizon. There were barracks and warehouses, kitchens and mess-halls in profusion, and as many more under course of construction. The roads were teeming with trucks and men. Steam-rollers were at work re-enforcing the road with stones crushed by great stone-crushers. German prisoners of war and American negroes and road-engineers were at work with shovels and picks. And all this where we had pitched pup-tents last June!

We were quartered in tents near the far end of camp, in section No. 87. True to its reputation, the place was a sea of mud. However, the tents were floored with wood, and a network of duckboards provided foot paths, so we did not mind the mud so much. This campe at Brest, Camp Pontanezen it is called, has been much maligned in the newspapers. Some of this criticism is warranted, yet everyone seems to forget that the building of such a huge camp with such speed as was required was a task of stupendous proportions. The constant rains and nature of the soil, coupled with the difficulty of draining the dirt-walled pastures, made it doubly difficult. Although there was mud galore at Brest, we have lived under worse conditions. We infinitely preferred good tents, cots, and stoves in a sea of mud bridged by duckboards to the cold, lousy barn-billets we had lived in before!

The weather being so rainy and cold, we were issued two extra blankets, making five in all for each man, and provided with bed-ticks filled with dry grass or hay. Wood and coal for the conical ironstoves was issued daily. We were fed at the troop-kitchens of which there were a dozen or more in camp. Each of these kitchens took care of approximately ten thousand men at each meal.

There were Y. M. C. A. huts and canteens, U. S. Commissaries, K. of C. halls, and Salvation Army tents scattered throughout the camp. Amusement, usually motion-pictures, was provided at these halls every evening. The Salvation Army, with free cocoa and doughnuts, made a particular hit with us.

We wouldn't have minded Brest so much if it hadn't been for details. Sixty, eighty, or a hundred men a day had to be sent out from the company at the orders of the camp officials. Each division had to contribute all possible to the improvement of the camp as it passed through on the way home. We did everything from ditch-digging to painting roofs and our clothes were in a sorry condition as a result when it came time to embark.

On Friday, March 7th, we had our first cootie inspection. The entire regiment was inspected, a company at a time. We marched into a large empty building, stripped off our coats and shirts, and peeled our undershirts up over our heads as the inspecting officer passed.

Swihart, Sylvia, Donahue, Harry Cater, and Krueger had 'em! Poor boys, they had to be shaved.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles C. Chambers, our former captain, paid Captain Wedow a visit on the eleventh. He called in many of the old Cleveland boys and gave them the glad hand. He was particularly happy because he was to sail for home the next day.

On the night of Wednesday, March 12th, we went through the camp delouser. Our clothing was hung on movable racks, and while we were under the showers, was subjected to a dry heat of exceedingly high temperature. We went through a regular "by the numbers" bath. It was a new one on us! The soldiers in charge of the place seemed to enjoy this chance to "boss us around." Absolute silence was required and half the joy of the bath was taken away because we couldn't shout and yell. We were lined up under the showers and at a signal the water was turned on. "Soak yourselves," we were ordered. We "soaked" for a half a minute and then the water was shut off. "Soap yourselves—soap is in the troughs," came the sing-song voice. We lathered our bodies with a peculiar soft soap like wall-paper paste and then, at the order, "Under the showers," we stood shivering on the wet slatted floor. They kept us waiting a sufficient length of time to properly impress it upon our minds that we were at the mercy of the S. O. S. and then turned on the water. We scarcely had time to rinse off the soap when the water was again cut off and we were shunted into

another room where we received clean underwear and our deloused clothes.

Our trip through one "mad-house" was over!

The day after we were deloused that old "mad-house" burnt to the ground. Somebody left a box of matches in his pockets. It was a sight for sore eyes to see the poor dudes pouring out naked into the cold air!

HOMEWARD BOUND

"The Day" came at last! On the morning of Wednesday, March 19th, the Captain, in high good humor, as evidenced by a constant flow of jokes and banter, personally aroused us at 4:30 a. m. An ordinary Skipper would have had the guard wake the Top Buck and have snoozed until daylight, but not Captain Wedow. He let everyone sleep as long as possible and then routed us out of bed himself. Maybe he was just so chuckful of good spirits that he couldn't resist telling us in person that "The Day" had come.

Before daylight we had our part of the camp spick and span and our extra blankets turned in to the supply sergeant. Our packs were rolled before breakfast. The hour of moving was uncertain, but, as ever before, the old Machine Gun Company was in readiness, come when it would.

After breakfast we went, bag and baggage, to the inspection building near the old delouser which had been destroyed by fire. Camp officers inspected our packs and clothing for uniformity and neatness, and ours were pronounced excellent. We marched out of the building, and then, due to an error, had to file through the "mad house" again for our final cootie inspection. Nobody had 'em!

When we got back to our tents we were issued a blue Red Cross kit bag apiece, which contained shaving soap, towel, handkerchief, tooth powder and tooth brush. These bags made a very convenient receptacle for the "junk" we had heretofore been carrying in our pockets and were much appreciated. We rested, rather, say fidgeted, in our tents for nearly an hour, and then, at 11:45 a. m., formed up in columns of squads on the road. Yes, it was raining—it always did when we moved!

Somehow, somewhere, something went wrong, and we stood there in the driving rain for nearly an hour and a half. Can you beat it—this army? There was but one thing to do, stand stolidly in our places and let the rain trickle off our little "Rain-in-the-face" caps and down our necks until the "powers that be" should decide that we were sufficiently soaked. How a soldier does hate rain and mud! How he does hate to have to stand helplessly and take it, not knowing why. And how fluently he can cuss the army at such times! The American soldier is the most unreasonable critter in the world

when he doesn't know the whys and wherefores of a disagreeable situation. For grouching and all around ability to cuss sarcastically he has every other kind of soldier backed off the boards. He could make Billy Sunday gasp for lack of breath in a cussing match.

The column finally started to creep forward by fits and starts, and when we came to a spot opposite the big troop kitchen we found further food for scathing remark and wholesale grouching. They were handing out Corned Willie and coffee as the column passed. And we had stood in the rain for an hour and a half when we might just as well have been eating a good dinner in the mess hall.

Now, to the uninitiated the foregoing will give the impression that we weren't at all appreciative of the fact that we were going home. Not so at all—beneath our grouching ran an undercurrent of happiness and content. We just love to kick and grouch about minor matters, that's all. As we got under way, though we found the roads "goosey" with mud, the rain driving in our faces, and our packs galling to our, of late, unaccustomed shoulders, we ceased berating the army. We were "doing something" now; this hike was something that had to be done. It was the beginning of our trip home!

The hike to Brest, by the back road which we necessarily had to take because of traffic, was about six kilometers in length. Our route led us through the city before we descended to the sea level and we tried our best to make a snappy and soldierly appearance, so that the people who saw us might have a good impression of the soldiers leaving their shores. We succeeded.

Arriving at the docks at about 3:30 p. m. we found things moved with a speed quite to our liking. Scarcely ten minutes elapsed before we were climbing the gang plank of the Great Northern. As we answered the check roll call from the passenger list we were given a pair of socks apiece by women of the Red Cross. They were stuffed, Christmas fashion, with gifts, which, upon examination, we found to be such things as cigarettes, gum, candy, chewing tobacco, and little cans of jam. Perhaps a soldier is a critical and uncompromising fellow, but nothing brings him more genuine joy and is received with greater appreciation than just such comforts as these.

Upon boarding the vessel we marched immediately to our quarters on "D-Deck" midway of the ship, and the lowest troop deck in the ship. The upper troop decks were filled with casualties and hospital cases, numbering about nine hundred men in all. We were allowed to roam at will about the boat, and the majority went at once to the open decks to while away the hours by watching the *activities around the docks and harbor.*

Compared with the Leviathan, the Great Northern was a pygmy ship. She had a capacity of about three thousand as compared with the Leviathan's twelve thousand. However, because of the freedom we were accorded, we liked her fully as well as the Leviathan. She was reputed to be the fastest ship in the Transport Service, holding the Brest-New York-Brest round trip record with the remarkable time of fourteen days, fourteen and a half hours. Previous to her induction into the Transport Service she had been a Pacific Coast passenger boat and was built to compete with coast line railroads.

Ruel: "What's them sand barges for, Speary?"

Speary: "Oh, them? Them's to put sand on the track when we start out, son."

While we were lying in harbor several Gobs came aboard, stewed to the gills. Rather, they were dragged aboard by M. P.'s and turned over to the ship's guards.

"Oh," cried a nurse. "The poor boys! They're just like soldiers, aren't they?"

Thursday, the 20th (still in port)—Riots predicted by Pete Clemens if gold brickers from other divisions continue to get fresh with the Thirty-seventh.

Reber, on guard, started in at once to make himself agreeable with the ladies. Two hours after we got aboard we saw him cud-dling up close to a nurse and whispering confidentially in her ear. She looked about as pleased as if she were taking a dose of quinine. How do they get that way?

Well, we suppose we're malicious, but we took quite a little joy in watching the S. O. S. birds watch us with envious eyes. Members of a fighting unit get their reward—they go home first!

Brest to New York

March 20th-March 27th

It is safe to say that we experienced the whole gamut of pleasurable feelings, as, at 6:10 p. m. the twentieth or March, we crowded to the rails and watched the tugs puff busily about us and warp us gradually away from the docks and out of the harbor. The dreams of months were being crowned with realization.

Our leave-taking was without regrets, without pomp or display. To those on the docks it was merely the sailing of another troop ship. The few soldiers on the docks and the group of nurses aboard another troop ship were the only ones to bid us farewell. The former watched us silently and made no demonstrations. The nurses fluttered handkerchiefs in the breeze and watched us through field glasses.

We, on our part, gazed upon the ever-widening strip of water with a satisfaction so complete and hearts so content that we never even thought of cheering. We had no regrets—no regrets for France. Perhaps we ran over in our minds the chain of experience that had been ours during our nine months with “The Expedition.” Perhaps we conjured up visions of the Argonne and Belgium, and compared them with our present situation. Could we forget, either, those comrades of ours, beloved in every sense of the word, who would never sail for home? Every one of those lads who fought beside us and died in the fight are enshrined in our memories. They—not the great generals, the great statesmen, or the wearers of the Croix de Guerre and D. S. C.—are our heroes.

The ship began to rock as we hit the open sea, for, unlike the old Leviathan, the round-bottomed Great Northern rode the swell—did not cut through it. Almost instantly dozens of men changed their expressions from happiness to distress—mal-de-mer had them in its clutches! The number of seasick soldiers increased steadily as land faded from sight. They lay forlornly on the deck or leaned over the rails. Down in the hot, fetid, lower troop decks conditions were worse. The few men who escaped seasickness may congratulate themselves.

The weather during the entire voyage was cloudy and rainy. The sun shone fitfully, but we had only one morning of pleasant, bracing, real sunshine. On the fifth day it rained steadily and the sea turned bleak and gray from the reflection of the clouds. A high wind sprang up and the whitecaps began to appear. The broad

undulating mass of water slowly heaved itself into heavy, cumbersome waves until the horizon took on a ragged appearance. By nightfall it was blowing a gale, the rain and spray were sweeping the decks, and the ship careened and rocked sickeningly. Half of the men had recovered from their first bit of seasickness and now they succumbed again.

The storm continued throughout the night and reached its climax the next day. No one but the ship's crew were allowed on the top or boat deck. The few of us who were not sick and went up on "A" to get away from the hot, ill-smelling troop decks were driven back down by the drenching we received.

Although we were extremely fortunate in having to spend only seven days on the water, we were sick and tired of it before three days had passed and did not appreciate our good luck. Other transports, among them the President Grant, which sailed twenty-four to seventy-two hours ahead of us, were overhauled and passed. Our ship showed her heels to all, as became her fine record in the Transport Service.

On Thursday, the 27th, we sighted land, and skirting what we concluded was Long Island, steamed into New York Harbor, and went into quarantine at 2:15 p. m.

Mere words cannot possibly express the wave of happiness that surged over us as we looked out over the harbor at the hundreds of ships, the busy tugs, the tall skyscrapers, the great docks and warehouses, and the hazy outline of the Statue of Liberty. It was all typically "American"—something that spoke of home—a vision which we had cherished through nine long months of hard going on foreign soil. Its colossal proportions and atmosphere of tremendous energy could be duplicated nowhere else in the whole world—this was our own land, the good old U. S. A.!

While we were waiting for release from quarantine a tug, bearing the sign, "Mayor's Welcoming Committee of the City of New York," came out to meet us. She pulled alongside and the band aboard her began to play a popular air. The effect was electrical—the boys swarmed to the starboard side and cheer after cheer rent the air, completely drowning the music. A husky riverman mounted the tug's bridge and hurled bundles of New York newspapers into the seething, yelling, madly cheering crowd of soldiers. We cheered until we were hoarse.

Then we noticed that the Great Northern was slowly getting under way. As we slipped toward the docks we cheered anything and anybody—deck hands on other ships, dock workers, the Brooklyn bridge, stenographers who waved to us from warehouse offices.

The Statue of Liberty especially brought forth a frenzy of excitement and lung-bursting yelling.

As we drew up to the long line of docks marked "U. S. Army Transport Service" we calmed down, but drank in the sights of home with no less appreciation. At last we swung slowly into the slip at Dock No. 2 and the gang planks shot forth. Our voyage was ended.

After a delay of over an hour, during which time the casuals, invalids and nurses were unloaded, we finally filed down the gang planks and crowded into the great shipping rooms. Immediately we were assailed by an army of Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., K. of C., Jewish Welfare and Salvation Army workers, who showered us with chocolate cream candy, almond bars, peppermints, flavored hard candy, gum, cigarettes and matches. The Salvation Army girls came forward with telegram blanks, in addition to gifts of candy and gum, and told us they would send messages for us free of charge, a service which was most opportune and highly appreciated.

"Now," said one happy soldier, "I know damned well we're in America!"

In addition to the aforementioned gifts we were given a fine meal of hash, hard boiled eggs, biscuits, coffee and canned peaches by the Red Cross. Even mess kits were provided to save us the trouble of using our own. Meanwhile, as we ate, we were again surrounded and loaded with good things. Never before had we been treated so royally. Every organization strained to its utmost to make us welcome and show us we were among "white men" once more.

McGinnis wasn't the only one who was afraid to stir from his bunk the first few days. If you left your bunk you tied a calf, that's all.

Nurses running around in nighties and heading for a place to heave were a common sight to the guards. Lots of men volunteered for guard duty.

The number of dudes with three-day beards reminded one of the Argonne.

As usual, the Sam Brownes got the cream. They mixed freely with the nurses and the men were permitted to crowd up to the roped off sanctuary and water at the mouth.

There were blamed few Sam Brownes on deck during the storm, however, so we got the use of the deck chairs for the time being.

We thought from the unusual quietness in our quarters that Freiter must have fallen overboard. Then we found out that he was seasick.

It was a common sight in the mess hall to see the mess kits, food and men slide to the floor at a sudden lurch of the ship. It's a wonderful experience to slide around in the stewed meat and gravy you're supposed to eat!

Some bright guy started the chestnut about having six meals a day on the ship—three going down and three coming up. When we first heard that we kicked a slat out of our cradle.

"If the Statue of Liberty ever sees me again she'll have to do an about-face," said Private Pearson, our talented vendor of worn-out jokes.

Major Philip Roosevelt, of the Seventy-seventh Division, was taken seriously ill and died before the ship could reach port.

Camp Mills

March 27th-April 8th

Having finished our meal at the dock, we were marched to the Long Island Ferry without further delay and ferried across the river. When we had docked on the Island there ensued a rather aggravating wait before we were unloaded. Then we marched a short distance to the Long Island Terminal and boarded electric trains. We felt, as we were whisked out of the city towards Camp Mills, that it would have been paradise to continue riding swiftly through the darkness until we reached Ohio. We were pretty tired, but could have forgotten our weariness with such a prospect before us.

When we reached Camp Mills and detrained we found—just as we had expected—that there was a fairly long hike before us. It was raining.

Three miles of steady footwork brought us to our quarters—barracks at the far end of the camp. It was then about 11 o'clock, but before we were permitted to turn in we had to go through the delouser. That proved to be the last cootie battle in which we were engaged. We got into our beds at 3:30 a. m.

Camp Mills turned out to be another exasperating halt in the journey home. We were there twelve days, and during that time had little to do but eat and sleep. It was very "soft," but speed was what we wanted.

The outstanding feature of our stay at this camp was the wonderful mess. We had been fed well at Brest, but this had former experiences backed off the boards. Not since we left Camp Sheridan had we received anything nearly as good—here, roast pork and dressing, mashed potatoes, apple turnovers, bread, jelly, and coffee with milk were a mere incident. We waxed fat and contented.

The first two or three days were devoted principally to reclothing the men and we soon began to improve in our appearance as a company. Nearly every man received a complete new outfit and almost everyone bought russet shoes. When we left Brest our Captain was complimented highly upon our snappy and clean appearance; the inspecting officers declared that we were the best outfit that had ever passed through Brest for embarkation. Now, with all our new uniforms, we looked and felt like candidates for Officers' Training.

Twenty-four-hour passes to New York were offered to those who wished to visit the great metropolis, but comparatively few men took advantage of the opportunity. Our interest was centered on one place—home.

Cleveland

April 9th-April 10th

Camp Mills passed into the limbo of our memories on Tuesday, April 8th. We pulled out of camp at 7:45 p. m., riding in tourist sleepers—no more box cars for us. At about noon the next day we paraded in Rochester, N. Y., where we received quite a hearty welcome, and, incidentally, a bit of good experience in the lost knack of keeping good formation on cobblestones and street car trucks.

After we left Rochester our train just “high-balled” and our hearts were beating nearly as fast as the wheels upon the rails. What a feeling it was when we entered Ohio!

At 6 o'clock in the evening we arrived in Cleveland, passing the 105th street station and beautiful Gordon Park, and then rattling through the lake front factory district—dirty and squalid, but good to look at, because for a great many of us it was home. We made one or two short halts before we finally came to rest in the yards at the foot of West 3d Street.

There we found a great welcoming crowd of people awaiting us—they had been waiting there for hours, and now, releasing their pent-up excitement, they surged about the cars in frantic search for their boys.

For those of us who did not live in Cleveland these greetings for more fortunate comrades could not help causing a lonesome feeling—however, ours would come later and be just as sweet to us.

Confusion reigned supreme for over half an hour, but finally we succeeded in forming a column and started for our regiment's old home, Central Armory. Men, women and children hung to the skirts of the column or marched in the ranks. Many of the boys fell out of the ranks and “beat it” with their loved ones. Tom Sawyer would have called it a “gorgeous” home-coming.

It would be futile to attempt an account of what the Cleveland boys did in their own homes or to narrate the various ways in which the rest of us spent the night. Let us pass on to the following day.

We gathered at the Armory about 9 o'clock in the morning, and already there was a large crowd of people on the spot. The parade was scheduled for 10:30 a. m., and, half an hour beforehand, we formed up in column of platoons on Lakeside Avenue. The skies threatened rain, but the crowds were not frightened at the prospect and grew steadily larger.

Promptly at 10:30 we started around the corner of West 3d, and the parade was soon in full swing. *A soldier does not like*

parades as a rule, but what a grand and glorious feeling it was to march between those long banks of cheering home folks!

We have no very distinct or coherent memory of that parade—the salient facts, as we recall them, were surging mobs along the curbs, with a conglomeration of cheering, shouted greetings, sharp explosions, and other rackets, with an undercurrent of band music from the head of the column. It was like a half dozen old-time Fourths concentrated in one. We passed the Square, up Euclid Avenue to 22d Street, back down Prospect to Ninth, and down Superior and 6th to the Armory.

Then followed the best part of the whole affair, the chicken dinner served by Cleveland mothers. Long, white-clothed tables had been set upon the Armory floor, all set and laid ready for us. A band played deafening blasts of music from the balcony, and, as we filed to our places at the tables the crowds in the galleries cheered and applauded. The mothers brought on the chicken. Ain't it great to be a hero!

The scheduled festivities now being over, we were dismissed until 7 p. m., at which time we were supposed to leave for Zanesville. It was after 9 p. m. when we did start, and the railroad yards were teeming with people bidding their boys goodby. This time, unlike our departure in the fall of 1917, their faces were cheerful and happy. We were coming back within a few days, and coming back for good.

Zanesville

April 11th

We pulled into Zanesville some time during the wee hours of the morning, but were not astir and up on the streets of the town until 7 or 8 o'clock. Most of us made for the barber shops of the town "tout-suite." We couldn't think of parading before all those beautiful mademoiselles without perking up and having our shoes shined. When we formed up at 10:30 we looked like a bunch of young plutocrats out for a lark.

The parade went through without a hitch, and as all parades are alike, we won't bother with unnecessary description. Besides, with a soldier, the "eats" are what count, and when we filed into the market house we surely got all we wanted. The place was a paradise of pie, ice cream, candy, cigarettes and coffee; we even got buttermilk.

Around every window and door a mob of people gathered, squabbling for a place to watch us eat. They seemed to enjoy the feast as much as we did. The small boys of the town reaped a wonderful harvest of good things from soldiers who were "full up." We had a glorious time!

Corporal Vandivort was the only member of our company whose home was in Zanesville, but he did his best; dragged half a dozen of his old comrades out to his home. We guess he didn't have to "drag" them, at that. Our hats are off to Vandy and his town!

Marietta

April 12th

We left Zanesville at 10 p. m. with a cheering crowd to bid us farewell. When we opened our eyes next morning we were in Marietta. Contrary to our expectations, this business of traveling around our good old home State was more of a lark than a disagreeable job; we wished we could continue the tour until everything was "set" for our discharge.

The parade started at the usual hour, 10:30 a. m., and following it, we went to the Ohio National Guard Armory for our "eats." We were then dismissed until 11 p. m.

We found Marietta to be a wonderfully beautiful little town, and, like those of Zanesville, the people were extremely hospitable, and made every effort to give us a good time. There were dances in the Armory both in the afternoon and evening, and automobile owners took hundreds of soldiers for rides about the town and surrounding country.

Camp Sherman

April 13th-April 22d

The story of the travels and adventures of the Machine Gun Company of Ohio's old Fighting Fifth, known in the great war as the 145th Infantry, now draws to an end. An account of our weary last nine days in the army, at Camp Sherman, would be a colorless story, indeed; we will not tell it. Rather, let us sum it up by saying that we turned in our equipment which we were not to take home, packed the rest in new suitcases, took our last physical examination, and on Tuesday, April 22d, at 8:30 a. m., were discharged from the service.

We had waited so long for this great event that a few words concerning it would not come amiss. When day broke that wonderful morning we were already astir, cleaning the barracks, packing up our things, and getting blankets and mess kits ready to turn in. Then we had breakfast, and thanked heaven it was our last in the army. Blankets, mess kits and suitcases in our hands, we started for the Q. M. C. warehouses. We left our suitcases and traveling bags behind at a point half way to our destination, which was at the farthest end of camp. Having rid ourselves of the blankets and mess kits, we retraced our steps and soon were filing into a very ordinary barracks, which looked like a wonder palace to us, for our money and the "papers."

The face of each man as he clutched his emancipation proclamation and hustled out of that barracks expanded in a broad grin. "Fineesh armee!" "Wow!"—we could have kissed our worst enemies!

Over on the railroad track lay a waiting special train. We already had our tickets, purchased at reduced rates. There was only one thing left to do now—shake hands with our old pals.

Folks, take it from us, that was the hardest thing in the world to do—bid our comrades goodby. We knew that we'd never see the majority of them again, and memories of hardships and good times together came flooding back to make the breaking up of our company a sad business. We had one consolation; this narrative, the true history of our trials and our days of fun in the service of Uncle Sam will be a constant source of joy for each and every one of us; it alone can take the place of buddies from whom we are separated, in all probability, for ever.

FINIS



These are our comrades who will never return; the men who toiled through weary months of training with us, sailed to France with us, hiked beside us, messed with us, played with us, slept with us, fought with us, and died beside us. Their bodies are in France and Belgium, but their souls are with God.

We love them as only soldiers can love comrades who were with them through thick and thin, and their memory is enshrined in our hearts. These are our buddies, our hero dead:

Albert Smith,
Louis Spiry,
Charles Griswold,
Paul Gusler,
McKinley King,
Norman MacLean,
John Buch
Andrew Brahler,
Herbert Stolte,
Ernest Thrun,
George Call,
Arthur Carney,
Lloyd Wheeler.

CASUALTY LIST

Wounded in Action

John A. Tilden.....	1st Lieutenant.....	Argonne
Harry S. Merriman.....	1st Lieutenant.....	Belgium
Charles O. Albaugh.....	Corporal	Belgium
Arthur J. Avery.....	Private	Belgium
Llewellyn Barbour.....	Private	Argonne
George F. Bartow.....	Private	Argonne
David Dawson.....	Private	Belgium
Walter S. Dunn.....	Private	Argonne
Victor Earl.....	Private	Argonne
Carlton A. Hine.....	Private	Argonne
Arthur D. Lego.....	Private	Argonne
Walter E. Lewis.....	Private	Belgium
Marion McGinnis.....	Private	Argonne
William A. Morgan.....	Private	Argonne
Homer F. Price.....	Private	Belgium
Benjamin J. Shiffman.....	Corporal	Argonne
Leonidas G. Smith.....	Private	Argonne
Olin B. Smith.....	Private	Argonne
John B. Speary.....	Bugler	Argonne
Elmo W. Stults.....	Private	Belgium
Ben Swihart.....	Private	Belgium
Walter L. White.....	Private	Belgium
Melvin Wheeler.....	Private	Belgium
Lester B. Williams.....	Private	Belgium
James Wilson.....	Private	Argonne
William Zack.....	Private	Argonne
Gennar Carelli.....	Private	Belgium
Frank Schanes.....	Private	Belgium

Gassed Severely

George Sierer.....	Corporal	Belgium
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Gassed Slightly

John H. Stimmel.....	Sergeant	Argonne and Belgium
Charles Frank.....	Private	Argonne
Wesley J. Bigler.....	Private	Argonne
Carl Karasek.....	Private	Argonne
Harold Raine.....	Corporal	Argonne

Killed in Action

Charles Griswold.....	Private	Argonne
Paul P. Gusler.....	Sergeant	Belgium
McKinley King.....	Private	Argonne
Norman MacLean.....	Private	Argonne
John J. Buch.....	Private	Argonne
Andrew J. Brahler.....	Private	Argonne
Herbert Stolte.....	Private	Argonne
Ernest Thrun.....	Private	Argonne

Died of Wounds

George H. Call.....	Private	Argonne
Arthur E. Carney.....	Private	Argonne
Lloyd A. Wheeler.....	Private	Argonne

Died of Disease

Albert Smith	Private	Camp Sheridan
Louis Spiry.....	Private	Camp Sheridan

ROSTER
Machine Gun Company, 145th Infantry
37th Division
United States Army

Officers

Capt. Charles L. Wedow.....	10207 Adams Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
1st Lieut. Harry S. Merriman.....		Buffalo, N. Y.
1st Lieut. John A. Tilden.....		Cleveland, Ohio
1st Lieut. Elmer E. Shultz.....	93 Lake St.....	Akron, Ohio
2d Lieut. Roger A. Smith.....		Cleveland, Ohio
2d Lieut. James L. Fri.....		

Non-Commissioned Officers

1st Sergt. Walter C. Clough.....		Cleveland, Ohio
Mess Sergt. Norman S. Byram.....	Muir's Landing.....	St. Clair Flats, Mich.
Supply Sergt. Howard H. Frye.....	R. F. D. No. 1.....	Madison, Ohio
Stable Sergt. Cesco R. Dillon.....		Proctorville, Ohio

Sergeants

Harry D. Cater.....	9702 Hough Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
William R. Hull.....	1652 E. 71st St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Elmer R. Krueger.....	13305 Darley Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Charles W. Luchte.....	3427 Harvey Ave.....	Cincinnati, Ohio
Edward H. Richner.....		Twinsburg, Ohio
Bernard J. Roney.....		Buckland, Ohio
George P. Ruff.....	2117 Seymour Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Paul S. Shutt.....	R. F. D. No. 2, Findlay Rd.....	Lima, Ohio
John H. Stimmel.....	601 Campbell Ave.....	Detroit, Mich.
Ernest Chapman.....	E. 95th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Paul P. Gusler.....		

Corporals

Clem O. Bailey.....	351 S. Jackson St.....	Lima, Ohio
Fay S. Brown.....	R. F. D. No. 2.....	Mendon, Ohio
Steven C. Byram.....	Muir's Landing.....	St. Clair Flats, Mich.
Ernest C. Clemmons.....		New London, Ohio
Milford Conley.....	312 7th St.....	Ashland, Ky.
Henry Felkey.....		Kalida, Ohio
Harry Harmon.....		Graysville, Ohio
Joseph M. Herman.....	14933 Cardinal Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
John Miller.....	R. F. D. No. 1.....	Uniopolis, Ohio
Peter L. Mumy.....	Route No. 4.....	Paulding, Ohio
William D. Perkinson.....	1302 Center St.....	Portsmouth, Ohio
Victor A. Norris.....	2203 E. 105th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Samuel A. Salzman.....	2252 E. 73d St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
George Sierer.....	1116 S. Atlantic St.....	Lima, Ohio
Leo A. Watters.....	Care J. A. Watters.....	Monroeville, Ohio
Samuel D. Vandivort.....	541 Luck Ave.....	Zanesville, Ohio
Charles O. Albaugh.....		
Benjamin J. Shiffman.....		Cleveland, Ohio

Cooks

Arthur W. Luther.....	3921 E. 93d St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Henry O. Mooren.....	9403 Meech Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Henry E. Welker.....		Berrysburg, Pa.

Buglers

John B. Speary.....	R. F. D. No. 2.....	Portsmouth, Ohio
Shirley Ruel.....	125 Front St.....	Portsmouth, Ohio

Horseshoer

Paul Slatinsky.....	2562 W. 10th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
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Saddler

Bane Sylvia.....	3718 Rhodes Ave.....	Portsmouth, Ohio
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Mechanics

Frank B. Dainus.....	1931 Lakeside Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Ray C. Engleman.....		Paulding, Ohio
Willard G. Seymore.....	223 Crescent Ave.....	Covington, Ky.

Privates—1st Class

Calvin E. Bailey.....		North Girard, Pa.
Donald L. Baxter.....	414 W. Spring St.....	Lima, Ohio
Perry E. Beardsley.....		Hudson, Ohio
Edward Berlett.....	Box 293.....	Conneaut, Ohio
William E. Blakeman.....	Route No. 3, Box 49.....	Lucasville, Ohio
Andrew J. Brahler.....		
Thomas W. Bruce.....	444 S. Main St.....	Amherst, Ohio
Paul W. Cater.....	9702 Hough Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Arthur E. Carney.....		
John J. Chabala.....	11335 Langley Ave.....	Chicago, Ill.
Spencer A. Coleman.....	2856 Woodbury Rd.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Halbert M. Davis.....		Kinsman, Ohio
Walter Dunn.....	77 Gilmore St.....	Waycross, Ga.
Arthur S. Dunstan.....	3434 Glenwood Ave.....	Toledo, Ohio
Richard L. Evans.....		McComb, Ohio
Hamer C. Farrell.....	524 Cedar St.....	Syracuse, N. Y.
Frank Farrington.....	1115 Fulton Ave.....	Akron, Ohio
Wilbur Felkey.....		Kalida, Ohio
Charles Frank.....	120½ E. Sandusky St.....	Findlay, Ohio
William Friedell.....	1094 E. 68th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Glenn W. Gayman.....		Donora, Pa.
John M. Gibson.....		
Audis Gray.....	9403 Meech Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Clarence V. Homer.....	103 Main St.....	Greenville, Pa.
Andrew F. Irwin.....	York Floral Co.....	York, Neb.
Ray N. Johnson.....	2228 E. 97th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Arthur W. Jolly.....	46 N 13th St.....	Kenmore, Ohio
Carl J. Karasek.....	455 E. 143d St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Lee O. Kurfis.....	3414 Daisy Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Walter E. Lewis.....		
Earl N. Lowry.....		Berlin Heights, O.
Norman MacLean.....		
Marion McGinnis.....	118 Harrison Ave.....	Lima, Ohio
Edwin F. Munson.....		
David A. O'Bannon.....		Garden City Mo.
William D. Preston.....	322 Haymond St.....	Fairmount, W. Va
Homer F. Price.....		Payne, Ohio
Lynne E. Rood.....		
Frank D. Roush.....	1 3 10th St.....	Toledo, Ohio
Lewis Siedler.....	961 E. 77th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Fred J. Sparks.....	1205 Colton Ave.....	Toledo, Ohio
Herbert Stolte.....		Cleveland, Ohio
George H. Tepper.....	5417 McBride Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Coalter K. Turner.....		Payne, Ohio
Harley Van Scoit.....		Arlington, Ohio
Clare Welch.....		Allegany, N Y
Melvin Wheeler.....		
Walter L. White.....	Box 94.....	Oakvale, W. Va.
James Wilson.....	3337 E. 125th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Herman F. Zellner.....	1099 E. 143d St.....	Cleveland, Ohio

Privates

Frank Adamek.....	1122 S. Desplaines St.....	Chicago, Ill.
William L. Anderson.....	R. F. D. No. 5.....	Windon, Minn.
William Angell.....	1566 W. 117th St.....	Lakewood, Ohio
Delta L. Artis.....	950 3d St.....	Portsmouth, Ohio
Arthur Avery.....		Payne, Ohio
George F. Bartow.....		
Henry G. Bates.....		Ironton, Ohio
Llewellyn Barbour.....		
Frank R. Bell.....	212 E. Hardin St.....	Findlay, Ohio
Charles J. Braun.....	2151 Clyborne Ave.....	Chicago, Ill.
John J. Bernwinkler.....	1425 Woodall St.....	Baltimore, Md.
Fern D. Butler.....		Andover, Ohio
Wesley J. Bigler.....	R. F. D. No. 1, Box 55.....	Clarington, Ohio
George H. Call.....		
Axel Carlson.....	1204 15th St.....	Rockford, Ill.
Gennar Carrelli.....	2101 Mead St.....	Racine, Wis.
Lester Carroll.....	Box 33.....	Malinta, Ohio
Floyd J. Chandler.....	716 Broadway Place.....	Toledo, Ohio
Jesse H. Chisnell.....	R. F. D. No. 35.....	Barberton, Ohio
Raymond L. Covert.....		Ashtabula, Ohio
Harry L. Crawmer.....		Toboso, Ohio
John Davis.....	R. F. D. No. 5.....	Payne, Ohio
David Dawson.....		
Adam Decker.....		Kalida, Ohio
John F. Donahue.....	615 E. 2d St.....	Lima, Ohio
August Duerlewanger.....	512 Reservoir Ave.....	Milwaukee, Wis.
Walter J. Durst.....	Route No. 5.....	Millsville, Wis.
Victor Earl.....	R. F. D. No. 1.....	Waynesfield, Ohio
Roy Earl.....	R. F. D. No. 1.....	Waynesfield, Ohio
William Eddy.....	269 E. 128th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Clinton Felkey.....		Kalida, Ohio
Murrel E. Fowler.....	116½ N. Main St.....	Findlay, Ohio
Edward H. Freiter.....	3123 E. 98th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Ethan R. Fry.....	R. F. D. No. 1.....	Paulding, Ohio
Clayborn G. Greenleaf.....		West Richfield, Ohio
Charles Griswold.....		
Russell G. Hall.....	71 W. Beatty Ave.....	Cambridge, Ohio
Wilbur Hasting.....	820 S. Metcalf St.....	Lima, Ohio
Carlton A. Hine.....		
Fay B. Hooker.....	R. F. D. No. 3.....	Latty, Ohio
Elif Jacobson.....	R. F. D. No. 2.....	Rio, Wis.
John Kanyuh.....	532 2d St.....	Fairport, Ohio.
McKinley King.....		
Lewis Krouse.....	R. F. D. No. 2.....	Fort Jennings, Ohio
Lars M. Larson.....		Beldenville, Wis.
Mike Lasher.....	908 W. 26th St.....	Erie, Pa.

Privates—Continued

Arthur D. Lego.....	947 W. Hopkins Ave.....	Barberton, Ohio
Herbert Lego.....	947 W. Hopkins Ave.....	Barberton, Ohio
Charles W. Lessiter.....	338 N. 2d St.....	Barberton, Ohio
Joseph J. Luce.....	524 E. Pearl St.....	Cincinnati, Ohio
Mathew Manning.....		Mulberry, Kas.
Joseph Meixner.....	912 35th St.....	Milwaukee, Wis.
Artie C. Miller.....		Grand River, Iowa
Gust Miller.....	Route No. 2.....	East Orwell, Ohio
Orville Mills.....	714 S. Metcalf St.....	Lima, Ohio
William A. Morgan.....	1285 167th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
John Meuller.....		Darlington, Wis.
Carl Munson.....	2428 E. 22d St.....	Minneapolis, Minn.
William Nuendorf.....	175 W. Main St.....	Juneau, Wis.
Percy Olson.....		Hammond, Wis.
Lester Outcalt.....	Route No. 1.....	St. Croix Falls, Wis.
Michael B. Patras.....	3127 W. 11th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Raymond A. Pearson.....		Lima, Ohio
Tony Phillips.....	421 23d St.....	Milwaukee, Wis.
John Pletcher.....	609 S. Woodlawn Ave.....	Lima, Ohio
Victor Puhl.....	R. F. D. No. 2.....	Fall Creek, Wis.
Harold Raines.....	656 Harrison Ave.....	Lima, Ohio
Albert R. Raufman.....	Route No. 1, Box 18.....	Nekoosa, Wis.
Clyde W. Reber.....	914 Fruit Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Volney Rice.....	Aragon Mill.....	Rock Hill, S. C.
Joseph F. Rock.....	620 Adams Ave.....	Eveleth, Minn.
Oscar Rotenberg.....	1000 3d Ave.....	Rock Island, Ill.
Frank Schanes.....	Route No. 1.....	New Rome, Wis.
Robert H. Schoenrock.....	425 Western Ave.....	Blue Island, Ill.
Albert Schwahn.....	Care A. F. Schwan & Son.....	Eau Claire, Wis.
John G. Schneck.....		
Harry Seaman.....	5107 Woodland Ave.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Louis Shaps.....	726 Rockaway Ave.....	Brooklyn, N. Y.
August Siem.....	842 Center St.....	Stevens Point, Wis.
Ralph Smith.....	521 Grand Ave.....	Findlay, Ohio
George E. Southworth.....	Route No. 1, Box 28.....	Piketon, Ohio
Leonidas G. Smith.....		Willowton, W. Va.
Olin B. Smith.....		
Joseph H. Spees.....	616 Center St.....	Lima, Ohio
Paul Stellato.....	772 Dekoven St.....	Chicago, Ill.
Crawford Stewart.....	965 Mobile Place.....	East Cleveland, Ohio
Elmo W. Stults.....		Wellington, Texas
Ben Swihart.....	433 E. 114th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio
Ernest Thrun.....		
Joe Tischler.....	1083 Marion St.....	St. Paul, Minn.
Adolph Traskewich.....	3127 S. Lowe St.....	Chicago, Ill.
Bayden Vujich.....	1541 E. 34th St.....	Cleveland, Ohio

Privates—Continued

Wynne A. Walters.....R. F. D. No. 3.....Sandyville, W. Va.
Ralph Watters.....Care J. A. Watters.....Monroeville, Ohio
Lloyd A. Wheeler.....
Lester B. Williams.....R. F. D. No. 3.....Van Wert, Ohio
Benjamin Wilson.....44 Stone Block.....Warren, Ohio
Ralph Wygant.....Mora, Minn.
William Zack.....2315 Hamilton Ave.....Cleveland, Ohio



